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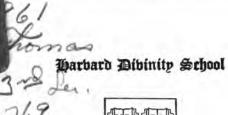
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THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "CRISIS OF BRING," "CORE OF CREEDS," "PROGRESS OF BRING," "RESURRECTIONS," &C., &C.

Vol. IX. THIRD SERIES.

VOLUME XX. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."-Paul.

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PREFACE.

This Volume is the ninth of the Third Series of the work. The only difference between this and the preceding series consists in its enlarged size and half-yearly issue.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the "Homilist," and no new specific description is requisite, the former preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no finish. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the design. Their incompleteness is intentional. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no denominationalism. It has no special reference to 'our body,' or to 'our Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily soul strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the 'Homilist' to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no polemical Theology. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the cardinal doctrines which

constitute what is called the 'orthodox creed'-has, nevertheless. the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. Spiritual morality is that end. Consequently, to the heart and life every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than pneumatics can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heartthe moral nature—was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the 'Homilist' did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!"

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park, Brixton.

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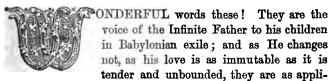


A HOMILY

ON

The Enduring in the Universe.

"For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."—Isa. liv. 10.



cable to his loyal children now, and here, as they were twenty-five centuries ago to his suffering ones yonder in Chaldea. They lead us to contemplate something more durable in earth's history than the mountains themselves. The mountains are durable. From age to age they stand unmoved; the revolutions of centuries affect them but little; they seem to lift their towering heads in proud defiance of all change. From the snows of a thousand winters they come out in spring and summer as fresh and beautiful as ever. The vine, the clive, the cedar, that spring from their slopes rise, grow, and decay in constant succession. But they stand. Hundreds of generations of cattle also that browsed on their heights, come and go; but they remain as emblems of eternity. Scripture calls them the "everlasting mountains." Ararat, on which the ark rested, and Noah and his family

looked forth upon a world all their own—Moriah, on which the father of the faithful bound his only son for sacrifice—Hor, on which Aaron took off his robes and died—Nebo, from which Moses surveyed the promised land and then breathed his last—Carmel, where Elijah confronted and confounded the false worshippers of his age—and the heights about Capernaum, consecrated by the feet of the Son of God; these, and others mentioned in the Holy Book, modern travellers tell us, stand occupying their old positions and wearing their old features.

But, durable as the mountains are, the text tells us of something more durable. What is that? The good man's existence, God's kindness, and the union of both.

I. THE GOOD MAN'S EXISTENCE IS MORE DURABLE THAN "THE MOUNTAINS." This is here implied. The people here addressed are supposed to live after the mountains have departed. On what do I base my conviction that man will outlive the "everlasting mountains," or, in other words, that there is a future state? I confess that many of the arguments which Theology has employed in proof of man's immortality carry but little, if any, force to me.

It is said, for instance, that the soul is immortal because it is immaterial. As I know nothing of the essence of matter or of mind, the word immaterial has no meaning to me, and therefore I cannot logically predicate anything concerning it. It is also said that the soul is immortal, because it has instinctive desires for a future life. Were I to grant that universal man instinctively craves for an after life, yearns for an existence beyond the grave, I see not how that longing can of itself be any proof of such a life; for are not men constantly yearning after things, such as wealth, power, happiness, which they never possess? Hence, man's craving after things is no guarantee that he will possess them. It is also said by some, that man is immortal because of the wonderful things he has accomplished. His achievements in rearing magnificent cities, sculpturing

forms true to life, discovering the laws that govern the universe, writing books to move the ages, and subordinating the forces of Nature to his service, are brought forward in proof of his immortality. It is said, "Could less than souls immortal thus have done?" But if this proves the immortality of man, may it not also prove the immortality of other creatures—prove, for example, the immortality of the coral insect that built up the lovely islands of the sea?

The fact that this life affords neither sufficient time nor opportunity for the soul to develop itself has also been used as an argument. That souls have capabilities which find no full development here, is a fact of which, I should suppose, all dying men are conscious. What the French political martyr felt under the terrible knife of the Revolution-when he put his hand to his forehead, feeling his soul flooded with ideas and aspirations, and exclaimed, "There is, nevertheless, something here!"—is felt perhaps by the majority of men in leaving this world; they feel then there is something within them undeveloped, unrealized, unworked. But this unwrought power bears no conviction to me of a future life, since I find everywhere in the flowers of the field, in the trees of the forest, and in the beasts of the field, death coming in stages of immature development. The conclusions of the sages of ancient times are also sometimes used as an argu-It is true that some of the wise men of antiquity did reason themselves into something like a belief in a future state. "In what way shall we bury you?" said Crito to Socrates, immediately before his death. "As you please," was the reply. "I cannot, my friends, persuade Crito that I am the Socrates that is now conversing and ordering everything that has been said; but he thinks I am that man whom he will shortly see a corpse, and asks how you should bury me. But what I have all along been talking so much about—that when I shall have drunk the poison, I shall no longer stay with you, but I shall, forsooth, go away to certain felicities of the blest-this I seem to myself to have been saying in vain, whilst comforting at the same time you and myself." But although the illustrious sage thus spoke, it is not a conviction, it is only a passing impression; for we find his doubt in his words to the judges who are about condemning him: "Know that death is certainly not an evil; for of two things it is one or the other, either annihilation, a sleep without a dream, when it is a good—for which of our days has ever been worth a night of complete repose, a deep sleep? Or it is a better state than our actual state, and by so much the more, then, a good." The idea of Socrates did not amount to much more than the poetic dream of old Homer, who imagined Ulysses to have descended into the world of souls, and there met and conversed with his mother and Achilles. Anyhow were it a faith, unless his beliefs were infallible they are no proof.

If my convictions of a future life are not founded on such arguments as these, on what then? I answer, on the revelation of God's will as contained in the Scripture, especially in the Gospel of his Blessed Son. The continuation of any creature's existence must depend upon the Creator. has willed that the strongest creature, constitutionally, shall live only a day, his strength will avail him nothing, he will not live an instant longer; or if He has purposed that the most fragile creature in existence shall live for ever, his existence, however frail, will never have a termination. know, therefore, how long any creature is to live, I must know the will of God in relation to the point. That will is revealed to me in the teachings of Christ and his Apostles. Here life and immortality are fully brought to light. "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life." Eternal life, meaning a life without sin, without misery, and without end, is an expression used no less than forty times in the The Gospel draws the material curtain New Testament. that conceals from us the world beyond the grave, and actually shows us men thinking, acting, suffering, exulting, in the eternal world. To the question, "If a man die, shall he live

again?" it says, "Yes," with a precision and an emphasis that admit of no debate.

The fact, thus so well attested, that a man is more durable than "the mountains" gives consistency to our life. Were there no existence beyond this, this life would be a crushing enigma. We should be harassed and confounded with questions for which we could find no solution—questions which preclude all faith in the wisdom, the love, and the justice of the To me, indeed, all religion seems to stand or fall with the question of a future life. Religion is love to God. Yet how can I love Him who endowed me with capacities which He denied me an opportunity to work out, capabilities which He crushed in the bud? How could I love Him who implanted within me restless cravings for a future that is not? How could I love Him who here requites not human conduct, allows the wicked so generally to revel in worldly prosperity, and the good so frequently to be the victims of oppression and want? No: if there is no future life I cannot love Him; for He has dealt too hardly with me in the nature He has given. I would rather not to have been than to be; or sooner have been the cattle that gambol on the hills, or the birds that warble in the groves, than to be what I am-burning with hopes which will be quenched in midnight—aching, for ever aching, after that which is a miserable illusion.

This fact of a future state gives grandeur to life. If we have no life beyond this, how contemptibly mean we are! At the base of the grand old hills, in the presence of the mighty ocean, or under the awful stars, what seem we if there be no future life? Wretched ephemera unworthy of notice! But as we are to live for ever, we rise in a majesty that throws the grandest of Nature's forms into insignificance. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed," but we shall be.

We infer from the text-

II. THAT GOD'S KINDNESS IS MORE DURABLE THAN THE "MOUNTAINS." "My kindness shall not depart from thee."

God's kindness is more durable even than man. Though man will never have an end, he had a beginning. God's kindness never had a beginning, and will never have an end. Kindness is the very essence of the Eternal, the root of all existence, the primal font of all blessedness in all worlds.

First: His "kindness" will continue notwithstanding the sins of humanity. The very fact that men, as transgressors of the divine law, are permitted to live in such a world as this demonstrates its mercy. When men transgress the laws of their country their liberty is destroyed; they are often bound in chains, incarcerated in dungeons, and in some cases have their lives taken from them. But here are we confessedly habitual transgressors of the divine law, enjoying the blessings of nature and the favours of Providence. Why is this? His "kindness" does not "depart" from us. "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him." The sins of six thousand years have not caused Him to withdraw his "kindness" from the world. It gleams as brightly in the heavens, breathes as vitally in the air, rolls as affluently in the seasons, flows as fully in the current of universal life as it did from the beginning. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Men often sin away the kindness of their fellowmen, quench their love, and excite their indignation, but they cannot sin away the "kindness of God." They may, they do, use it to their injury, as they burn themselves in fire, destroy themselves in water, and poison themselves by food. Still it is kindness, though out of it they make their hell.

Secondly: His "kindness" continues notwithstanding the sufferings of humanity. In fact, his kindness is expressed in human suffering. If we saw things as they really are, we should discover that there is as much kindness in the afflictions and trials of men as in their comfort and prosperity. Does not the loving father often show more love to his child in correcting him for his offences than in gratifying his

desires? Such kindness, in truth, is the most self-denying "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." There is kindness in the judgments that The inspired bard of Israel celebrates the mercy befall men. of God in judgments as well as in blessings. Egypt and her firstborn; for his mercy endureth for ever: overthrew Pharaoh and his host; for his mercy endureth for ever: smote great kings and famous kings; for his mercy endureth for ever: Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan; for his mercy endureth for ever." It is mercy that breaks up oppressive governments, sweeps despots from the world, and makes clear the path for the progress of humanity. The most terrible judgments are but God's mercy weeding the world of its evils. Even hell itself is an expression of divine kindness. Gehenna was a valley in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, into which the refuse of the city was thrown, and where the decomposition of animal and vegetable matter generated "worms that never died," and where fires were kept burning day and night in order to prevent the effluvia from spreading disease and death through the population of the city. What that Gehenna was to Jerusalem, hell is to the moral universe-a sanitary institution—an institution to prevent the spread of evil. What is law, but kindness speaking in the imperative mood? What is punishment, but kindness crushing the power that would destroy the happiness of the creation?

God's kindness, then, is everlasting: his "mercy endureth for ever." Let the mountains and the hills "depart." Let all the orbs of heaven be quenched. Let the whole system to which we belong vanish as a cloud; God's kindness will remain, and will be as active in the universe as ever.

From the text we infer-

III. THAT THE UNION BETWEEN BOTH WILL BE MORE DURABLE THAN THE "MOUNTAINS." "My kindness shall not depart from thee." It must be remembered that these words were addressed to his own people, and not to men in general;

and the idea is, that His kindness will continue for ever in connection with the truly good.

God's kindness is indissolubly associated with the good. St. Paul challenges the universe to effect a separation. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" What can cause His "kindness" to "depart?" Can sufferings do it? The trials of good men on this earth are often great, and the agonies they sometimes have to endure, emaciate their frames, and render their looks hideous to mortal eyes. But will these sufferings cause the Infinite Father to withdraw his love? The afflicted child in the family, instead of lessening parental affection, intensifies and absorbs it. And is not this an indication as to how the sufferings of the good affect the heart of the Eternal Father? "Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword"—let these do their worst upon us; they will not cause God's "kindness" "to depart." "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; he knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust." What can cause His "kindness" to "depart"? Can our moral imperfections do it? I have no word to say in extenuation of sin in any form. Sin must ever be odious to the eye of infinite purity. But I rejoice to believe it will not cause God's "kindness" to "depart." He does not love us on account of our excellences, but despite of our imperfections. We were bad, and He saw the worst of our badness from beginning to end before He loved us first. No sin that we can commit can ever shock Him by surprise. That young man who has wrought a crime which has shocked the moral sense of the age, and is now in the cell of the murderer, awaiting the hour when inexorable justice shall force him to the scaffold, there, before an execrating crowd, to pay down the penalty of his life, has a mother; that mother for years, he has treated with shameful insolence and heartless cruelty, causing her heart to bleed and her health to wane. Has his wickedness extinguished her love? No; it is there yet in all the freshness of its strength, and willingly would she press the monster of the scaffold to her

breast. Is God a father less loving than that mother? No. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." "He remembered us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever." What can cause His "kindness" to "depart"? Can enemies? Not unfrequently does an enemy come in between human friends, and with the foul tongue of calumny create a strife and dissolve the friendship. But no one can misrepresent us to the eye of Omniscience. He knows all that is in us; "He understands our thoughts afar off." Neither "angels, principalities, nor powers," can cause His kindness to depart from his children. Can absence do it? Absence seldom makes human hearts grow fonder. Amidst the ceaseless activities, absorbing engagements, and new associates in daily life, the absent ones, however dear, are likely to sink into forgetfulness; but no distance can separate us from Him; we are ever before His eye. "Neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can separate us from the love of God."

What, then, can cause his kindness to depart from his children? Nothing. Anyhow, nothing that my reason can suggest or my imagination invent. "I give unto my sheep eternal life; they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my father's hand." Can the hand that holds in its mighty grasp all the life and force, the spirit, and matter of the universe, ever be forced to relax its grasp? Never!

Another year is gone, and, like its predecessors, has worked the ordinary changes in God's great universe, and in all human things. Much it has borne away into the vast abysses out of sight, and much it has brought out to being from the creative forces of eternity. Thus Time, in its resistless and majestic march, shall proceed until it has cleared away the old heavens and the old earth. But though it shall hurl the hoary mountains and hills from their sockets, and pluck suns and stars from their centres, I shall survive, I shall be somewhere in his

unbounded dominion, with all the memories of a wonderful past, and the hopes of an ever-brightening future. God's kindness, untouched by the revolution of ages, will be flooding the creation with brightness and with bliss. The union between His kindness and my deathless spirit will continue, defying the universe to break it up. "Who shall separate us from the love of God?"

A Yomiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its wider truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

Subject: The Conclusion of Paul's Voyage from Greece to Syria.

"And it came to pass, that, after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. Now, when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days; who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again. And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren,

and abode with them one day. And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea; and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, (which was one of the seven,) and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things. both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. There went with us also certain of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge."-Acts xxi. 1-16.

AUL has taken his final farewell of the elders of Ephesus on the shore of Miletus, and the parting scene was most touching. His friends, with sorrowing hearts and tearful eyes, having accompanied him into the ship, he pursues his voyage. And as this narrative is a continuation of the preceding history, we shall rapidly glance at HIS DEPARTURE FROM MILETUS AND HIS ARRIVAL IN JERUSALEM. it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara." The expression "gotten from them" means, having torn ourselves from them, so strong were the ties of loving sympathy that bound their hearts together on the shores of Miletus that the disruption was an effort of agony. Each of the first three places the vessel reached mentioned in the text deserves a moment's notice.

Coos is an island in the Ægæan Sea, about twenty-three miles in length, near the coast of Cairia, about forty nautical miles south of Miletus. It was a fertile spot, famous for its vineyards, its wine, silk, cotton, and for its worship of Esculapius, and the residence of Hippocrates. It is probable

that they reached this island on the evening of the day on which they started from Miletus, for it would seem the vessel had an auspicious wind-"we came with a straight course unto Coos." Rhodes is the second place mentioned. This was another island. It was south-east of Coos. It was celebrated for its gigantic statue of Apollo, a colossus regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world. The image was most stupendous; it was made of brass, and strided the entrance of the harbour. Between its legs ships in full sail entered and departed. The vessel reached this beautiful and far-famed island "the day following." The other place is Patara, a town on the coast of Lycia, near the mouth of Xanthos, where Apollo was believed to utter oracles at certain Here Paul and his companions had to disembark. Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, bearing contributions from Macedonia and Greece to the destitute Christians in Judea. and he was anxious to be there in all haste, in order to attend The vessel that had conveyed him to Patara, the Pentecost. had perhaps either finished her voyage there, or was proceeding in some other direction than to the ports of Phenicia. Providence favours the good, and the apostle finds at Patara a "ship sailing over unto Phenicia," he and his companions embarked without a moment's delay. And now the voyage was more propitious. Free from shoals and rocks, they sail no longer through narrow channels, and under the shadow of great mountains, but out in the open sea. distance between Patara and Tyre, the capital of Phenicia, is three hundred and forty geographical miles, and if they had a favourable voyage, as the narrative seems to imply they had, they accomplished it in about fortyeight hours. During the sail they "discovered Cyprus," a famous island we have elsewhere described; and perhaps in the course of a few hours after a glimpse of the celebrated spot, they "landed at Tyre," one of the most famous cities of the ancient world. A city described by the old prophets in a state of splendour, where its merchants were princes, and its traffickers the honourable of the earth.

"Here the ship was to unlade." Perhaps she had brought grain from the Black Sea, or wine from the Archipelago. Here Paul and his companions discovered what to them was more precious than all the wealth of the cityfollowers of Christ. "And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days, who said to Paul, through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." Who these disciples were, in what way they were brought to Christ, and by what means the Apostle now found them out in the city, are points on which we have no information. The "Spirit" in some way had informed them of the sufferings which Paul would endure at Jerusalem, and their love prompted them to dissuade him from his purpose to visit it. Their words were not a divine command to Paul, but their own inference, from the fact divinely revealed to them, that Paul was to suffer there. It was not the Spirit that said he "should not go up," but their mistaken love. Having spent the seven days, the vessel having unloaded and taken in another cargo, she is ready for sea again. "And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way; and they all brought us on our way with wives and children, till we were out of the city, and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed." Here is another parting scene presented with inimitable simplicity; full of nature and of touching interest. The Christian families of Tyre, husbands and wives, parents and children, followed Paul and his companions with loving sympathies down to the beach, and there on the hard shore, under the open heavens, and the howl of the sea, kneeled down in prayer. A modern traveller has sketched the very spot on which this touching scene occurred.

The vessel is now ready, she is floating on the crested wave, the sails are hoisted, and the moment for separation has come. The last embrace is given. "And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again." The first port they reach after having left Tyre was Ptolemais. "We came to

Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day." This place, it was said, was named after Ptolemy, the first king of Egypt. Its modern European name is Acre. It was a Palestinian city of the Mediterranean, about thirty miles south of Tyre. It has been the perpetual theatre of war, constituting, as it does, the key of Syria, and has stood perhaps, longer on the field of history than most of the other places mentioned in the Holy Book. The present population is about 20,000. They discovered "brethren" here: they saluted those brethren, and remained with them one day. From Ptolemais or Acre they start next day for Cæsarea, a city on the coast of the Mediterranean, about thirty-six miles to the south of Ptolemais, and about sixty north-west of Jerusalem. was rebuilt by Herod the Great, and named Cæsarea, in honour of Augustus Cæsar. It has long since been blotted out of existence. Its Christian associations, however, possess an imperishable interest. It was the abode of the centurion Cornelius, the first Gentile believer in the new faiththe Abraham of Gentile believers. Here the angel smote Herod because he gave not God the glory. Here Peter unlocked the gates of the kingdom, and flung them open for the Gentile world. Here, as we shall see, Paul made Felix tremble and Agrippa almost a Christian; and here for two long years he was held a prisoner, and from thence sent in bonds through storms and shipwreck to Here they remained some days, and were the guests of Philip the Evangelist. "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cæsarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the Evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him." He was one of the seven elected deacons of the Church at Jerusalem (Acts vi. 5), but since then had become an evangelist—a preacher of the Gospel. After his conversation with the eunuch he had "gone down to Cæsarea" (Acts viii. 40), and had continued ever since preaching the new faith. How many converts he had won we are not told, but we are told something of his family. "He had four daughters, virgins, which did

prophesy." In their case the prophecy was fulfilled. (Joel ii. 8.)

While the Apostle and his companions abode in the house of this distinguished family, a prophet came down to him from Jerusalem, dramatically warning him of the danger which awaited him there. "And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judwa a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." It is probable that this Agabus was the same man as he who foretold the famine, and gave occasion to Paul's first official mission at Jerusalem. (Acts xi. 27-30.) It was not an uncommon thing for the prophets to perform actions emblematic of the events they predicted. Thus Jeremiah, in order to denote the approaching captivity of the Jews, was directed to bury his girdle by the Euphrates. (Jer. xiii. 4.) And thus Isaiah, in order to indicate the captivity of Egypt, walked naked and with bare feet. (Isa. xx. 3, 4.) Many other instances of similar emblematic actions occur. (See Jer. xxvii. 2, 3; xviii. 4; Ezek iv. also xii.) Christ Himself acted in the same way when He took a towel and girded Himself, and washed the disciples' feet. (John xiii. 4, 5.) Such symbolic actions added to the impressiveness of the declaration. The action of Agabus was felt to be impressive now. "And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem." Their hearts were smitten with sadness at the terrible dangers awaiting Paul which were thus so dramatically announced, and with tears they besought him not to go to Jerusalem. Paul, however, had made up his mind, he was not to be turned from his purpose, although he deeply felt the tenderness of their appeals. "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart ? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Seeing the invincibility of his purpose they ceased to persuade him, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Having thus spent some days with Philip and his family, listened to the prophecies of his virgin daughters, received the terrible warning of Agabus, and overcome the powerful persuasions of his friends not to go to Jerusalem, he and his

companions depart.

"And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem." The word carriages does not mean conveyances, but baggages. "We took up our carriages" is, in the Greek, all in one participle, and means taking up our luggage. Some of the disciples of Cæsarea accompanied them, who "brought with them one Mnason, of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge." Four things are indicated of this Mnason, that he was a native of Cyprus, that he had been a convert to Christianity for some time, he was called an "old disciple," and that he had a house at Jerusalem to which the apostle was taken.

Thus we have followed Paul into Jerusalem, and here for the present we leave him.

There are several subjects of a spiritual and useful character discoverable in this fragment of apostolic history, which we would endeavour, with great brevity, to bring into prominent impressiveness.

I. THE SOCIAL LOVE GENERATED BY THE GOSPEL. There is an affection which man has for man altogether apart from Christianity. It is an affection of animal sympathy, personal interests, mental reciprocities. But the social love generated by Christianity is of a purer and higher character. Several of its features are here displayed.

First: Strength. So strongly did it bind Paul and the Ephesians together on the shores of Miletus that they had to tear themselves asunder:—for such is the meaning of the expression translated "after we had gotten from them." Their souls had so deeply struck the roots of their love into each other's being, that a violent energy of will was required for

the separation. The parting scene, too, on the Tyrian shore, and the tears wept on leaving Cæsarea, also indicated the strength of Christian love. The love which genuine Christians have for each other is not the thread of a passing sentiment, but the golden chain of an immutable law. It is that which binds all the hosts of heaven in an indissoluble unity of thought, aspiration, interest, and pursuit.

Secondly: Hospitable. It is probable that Paul and his companions were entertained in the homes of Christians wherever they stayed. It is distinctly stated that they abode with Philip. Paul a guest in Philip's house! This is one of the divine marvels which sometimes occur in the history of The name of Saul of Tarsus at one time was a terror to the heart of Philip. Elsewhere we have these remarkable words: "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." (Acts viii. 3-5.) We perceive from this that terror of Saul drove Philip from his home at Jerusalem. Had they ever met since? Probably never. What a change the Gospel has accomplished. The lion has become a lamb. He from whose presence he rushed as from a fiend, he now entertains as a loving brother and a distinguished Apostle of the Lord. Christian love is hospitable: its doors are ever open to the faithful. Its motto is "Share and share alike." It holds its possessions as the common property of the brotherhood. Use hospitality, &c.

Thirdly: Tender. Christianity quickens the sensibilities and intensifies the feelings of the human heart. The more Christianity a man has in him the more tender he is. Lived there ever a man with more Gospel in him than Paul, and was there ever a man more tender in soul? In nearly all the partings recorded in these verses there were tears.

Fourthly: Religious. In parting with the Ephesians we are told that he kneeled down and prayed with them all, and

in parting with the men of Tyre he did the same. "We kneeled down on the shore and prayed." Christian love turns to God as the opening flower to the sum. It presents its dear objects to the loving guardianship of the Eternal Father. The best way of serving one's friends is to commend them "to God" as Paul did, and to "the word of his grace." Apart from Him we can render them no help. Our best thoughts, our wisest counsels, our tenderest sympathies, our most costly gifts will be of little service apart from His benediction and superintending care.

Such then are some of the features here developed of that love which Christianity generates in the hearts of its disciples. Another subject discoverable in the piece of Apostolic history before us is—

II. THE FALLIBILITY OF HUMAN AFFECTION. The good men of Tyre loved Paul, yet they sought to dissuade him from duty, so also did the good men of Cæsarea: "They besought him not to go out to Jerusalem." So urgent and powerful were they in their persuasions, that Paul exclaims, "What ! mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" Or, as it has been better translated, "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?" We do not know the arguments they employed; but we know in both cases they quoted the Holy Spirit's influence. At Tyre we are told that the disciples said to Paul, "through the Spirit," that he "should not go up to Jerusalem." And at Cæsarea the prophet Agabus said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost." This reference to the Spirit would add power to the urgency of their loving appeals. He was deeply moved by it, but not mastered. All their arguments were the arguments of mistaken love—arguments which, if they had succeeded, might have injured the character and usefulness of Paul. Human affection often recommends that which is not good. The mistaken kindness of parents has ever proved the greatest curse to children. Never does the devil act so mightily upon the human heart as when his errors are urged on us by the arguments of those

who love us most. Let us learn to act in relation to this mistaken kindness of our friends as Christ acted in relation to Peter, who from love attempted to dissuade Him from prosecuting the painful part of His mission. "Get thee behind me, Satan." The counsels of the purest human love are not always wise. Another subject discoverable in this parative is—

III. THE UNCONQUEBABLENESS OF A CHRIST-INSPIRED PURPOSE. Mighty as was the influence which love brought to bear upon Paul both at Tyre and Casarea, to prevent him from going to Jerusalem, it could not break his purpose; he was invincible in his determination. "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." His determination was not a caprice, not a mere wish, not an intention formed in haste, not a resolution based on mere natural desires, or reasons of expediency. It was a determination based on the strongest convictions of his judgment, backed by the whole current of his sympathies, and deeply rooted in him by the spirit of Christ. Such a purpose cannot be broken; it defies opposition, it removes mountains. Luther felt it to be so as well as Paul. When Spalatin, the beloved friend of the illustrious reformer. joined, with many others, in entreating him not to enter Worms, on account of the terrible dangers that there awaited him, his reply was, "though there were as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the housetops, yet will I go thither." Such a purpose as this is the heart of true moral courage. Physical courage is a mere gift of nature, and often that which is called moral courage, is nothing but mere insensibility and obstinacy of nature. Paul seems to me to have been physically a weak man, and mentally a timid, nervous, sensitive soul. In writing to the Corinthians, he says, "I was with you in fear, and much trembling." And yet this man had an indomitable heroism, and that heroism is to be ascribed to his Christ-inspired purpose.

Another subject discoverable in this narrative, is-

IV. THE SUBLIMEST VICTORY OVER SOUL. "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done." They did not conquer him with their combined power, but he conquered them single-handedly; he did so by his invincible purpose. And what a conquest! "The will of the Lord be done." This does not mean "We must bow to the necessity." Many men are brought to do this who have no Christianity. The ungodly father, when life has fled from his child; the reckless speculator, when he has played the game that has wrecked the whole of his fortune; the criminal, when he is in the hand of justice: these, and many others, say, when all hope is gone, "The Lord's will be done." their case it means a soul whose energies are crushed, whose hopes are blighted, upon whom the night of despair has set But here it would be understood to mean a cordial acquiescence. And it implies a belief—(1.) That there is a God. (2.) That that God has a will in relation to individuals.

(3.) That the working out of that will is the best thing. We say this is the sublimest conquest over souls.

First: It is a conquest over the folly of souls. The greatest folly in the universe is to oppose the will of God. It is the folly that leads to all the perplexity, confusion, and misery of the world. The wisest thing is to acquiesce in that will that is all wise, all good, all mighty.

Secondly: It is a conquest over the wickedness of souls. Opposition to the divine will is the very essence of all sin; the world's guilt, the world's crime, is rebellious hostility to the Divine will.

Thirdly: It is a conquest over the misery of the souls. Opposition to the Divine will is hell. Obedience is heaven. The sublimest victory in the universe is this victory over soul:—The victory this for which Christ and his followers are fighting.

Homiletical Studies of the Old Testament.

Subject: The Creation.—Genesis i.

TE propose to present to our readers the results of a study of the Old Testament writings, seeking not so much for the mere historical or political narrative which the writings contain, but rather those spiritual and moral truths which underlie each scene. The political event or law, even the peculiar ecclesiastical ordinance, is a mere temporary and evanescent thing. The facts and much of the injunctions of the Old Testament are dead and rotten in the grave of the past; but the spirit and the principle are living, effective, and must not be neglected and forgotten by us. It is this which makes the story of a family, the chronicle of a people, the laws and beliefs of the church of a small section of the human race, to be the Bible of man and the book of God. Our task will thus be perhaps most religious. shall try to lose sight of that which is sectional, particular, appropriate only for a time and only to a people; we shall try to see through this into the divine truth—the grand universal principle of moral being, by which our souls may be brought nearer to God, and helped in the work of these Men and circumstances, places, times, and needs all are changing; but man is ever the same. His spiritual requirements, his moral wants are to-day what they were when Moses wrote his books, or Job upbraided his comforters.

It is then not a commentary, not a history, not an exegetical and critical exposition that we propose to give. We shall find neither science, nor ecclesiastical polity, nor history in the Bible. Questions of date and number; discussions of miracle and theological system, alike we leave the reader to find in the books that are perhaps too plentiful. In our work we

shall freely use all such helps, and possibly give hints to those who might wish to prosecute such study; but here at least we must limit ourselves to the results of our toil in this mine of religious truth. May the great Spirit, eternal and ever living, aid our endeavour! May we find by His help not the word that killeth, but the spirit which maketh alive!

The order of our studies will be simply that of the Sacred Scriptures themselves. Our first study will be THE CREATION.

The Bible commences with the first great act of God. It is a book about God and His relation to man. It is the story of man's life as seen by God's eye. It was, however, necessary that man should have a clear and definite announcement of the origin and source of himself and the world around him. In the midst of false cosmogonies, Egyptian and Oriental, God gives man through a particular people *His* version of the beginning.

We learn-

I. There was a beginning and this was the act of God. An important declaration when Moses wrote it down—still a truth that some moderns should ponder. Matter is not eternal. The world is not the form of an ever changeful necessity. Atheism and Pantheism are demolished by the first sentence of the world of God. There is a God. He is a Being separate from the world, for He has created it. We are thus introduced to the Divine will which exists in this universe.

II. THE DISORDER OF PRIMAL CREATION IS REDUCED TO ORDER BY THE POWER AND INTELLIGENCE OF THIS DIVINE WILL. We might have had matter created by will, but all might have remained shapeless and inane. Darkness on the world, and darkness in the soul of God. But this is not so. The life of God is imparted to the chaotic world. God's intelligence is reflected in the light which he gives to the heavens and the earth. Another step in the grand progress is then indicated. The light is approved by God. Power has developed

through will and intelligence into emotion. Marvellous parallel! What a picture of creation's growth! What an unfolding to him who reads, of the attributes of God!

III. THIS PROGRESS OF CREATION PASSES FROM ORDER. THROUGH ORGANIZATION, INTO LIFE, UNTIL IT CULMINATES IN MAN. Sea and land, light and darkness, are separated; plants and animals are created; man is at last formed. Plants and animals are after their kind—the first created are the only pattern except the idea in the mind of God. Not so with He is after the likeness of God. What is this? It cannot be in form of body, nor, perhaps, in form of thought. Divine intelligence cannot be limited as ours is. But what have we in the history? A command. "Be fruitful, &c., and have dominion." Man is the subject of expressed law-a king, he is yet to obey. This is only the next step in creation's progress. We rise to its crown—the place where moral law must be recognised. To man is given the expressed command of his God.

What then is the story that the book of creation tells? It is, that one all mighty intelligent personality created the whole universe; through a wonderful series of creative acts. He marches on His way; and, at length, forms a being like Himself, with intelligence, will, and moral attributes, giving to this, His son, all dominion over the earth which He has made his residence.

There are, perhaps, a few minor lessons which may be suggested here. 1. The adaptation of this world to be man's place of abode while God tries him by the duty He has placed upon him to perform. 2. All things are subject to man's use and government. 3. The human race is of one blood, derived from one pair. 4. God loves order. When He performs a series of works there is most probably progress.

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Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: The Voice of the Past.

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles."—1 Peter iv. 3.

Anglysis of Fomily the Seben Hundred und Forty - First.

ET us break up this sentence into three or four parts, making each section a sort of textual division:—
"life"—"our life"—"the past of life"—"the time past of life," &c.

"Life." What mystery is wrapped up in life! great the power needed to bestow it! He only who is the author of life can impart life. Great is the power of man; almost exhaustless his resources of ingenuity and muscular But the power that can erect pyramids and palaces, bridge rivers, almost annihilate time and space, through the wonders of electricity, has not yet discovered means whereby to resuscitate the vanished life of an insect. The whole of inanimate nature, with all its marvels of revelation and divine power, does not, perhaps, furnish a lesson of instruction comparable to the living moving wonders of a drop of water. What consummate skill, what exquisite perfection and beauty of workmanship are revealed in the organic structures of creature-life, residing in a mere globular world! We need not wonder that the Psalmist should, by way of an expressive pre-eminence, call upon "everything that hath BREATH" to "praise the Lord,"

What transcendent worth, then, must belong to human life!—to

"OUR LIFE." We read of the Creator speaking dead and shapeless matter into beautiful formations, and, by the working of a divine manipulation, calling into existence the creature-life of all that moved in air, earth, and sea. But when the sacred historia would record the masterpiece of the divine workmanship, he tells us that "God breathed

into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul"—
"fearfully and wonderfully made," even as regards his
bodily organization, but as respects his sublime relationship
to the Author of life, and to the ages of interminable being,
a creature marvellous and fearful, begotten by the breath of
Him who is the Father of everlasting ages.

"Our life" is redeemed life. It was great to speak a world from nought. It was greater to create moral life, and fashion it after the divine and high original. It was greatest to redeem. To create life required but a word, a touch, a breath; but to redeem life was a work sufficient to tax infinite wisdom and almighty power-a work so stupendously great that it demanded the mysteries of the incarnation, the long and protracted stages of the Saviour's humiliation, sufferings, death, and resurrection! What infinite and unutterable value must belong to human life! "Our life" is the only life, of which we have any knowledge, for which a ransom has been paid!--and what a ransom! We wonder not, then, at the Redeemer's words, in which He has given to us his own estimate of human worth,-"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

"The past of life." How little we know of the past—taking the world in its broad and comprehensive relationship to the world! As a question of history we know something of the world's civilization, science, art, human laws and governments, human thoughts and actions. But what do we know of the individual experience of mankind—its joys and sorrows—the swelling surges of human emotions of ever-varying moods, which, like successive waves of ocean, have swiftly chased each other over the broad surface of humanity, for the space of more than 6,000 years! And oh! what an impenetrable veil lies between that past and us as respects the moral and eternal consequences of wasted life—the irrecoverable past—extending over so many generations, and affecting in each generation so many millions of immortal

souls! We thank God that He has thus concealed from us this past! We thank Him, more, that it is not our past!

But there is a past for which God holds us responsible an individual past—

"THE TIME PAST OF OUR LIFE." Nothing that I have is my I belong to God, in body, soul, and spirit. In Him I live, and move, and have my being. I am, therefore, accountable to Him for my time. Life is God's loan to man, and time man's "life-rent of the world." That loan has been granted on one great condition; that it be returned with interest: otherwise forfeited-taken from him. In the great day we are to stand before God to give an account of our stewardship, when the faithful will be able to say, "Lord thy pound hath gained ten pounds;" while to the unfaithful, the message will go forth: "Take from him the talent, and give to him that hath ten talents." The "life-rent" which the great Proprietor claims is service. He has put us into His beautiful world to make it more beautiful by adding moral to material beauty. If we fail to render this service we shall lose our life, in a sense which human language is not adequate to express. "He that loveth his life shall lose it." Life is God's property, and from every one of us, sooner or later, He will "require" it at our hands, either to glorify it with a life, the lease of which will never run out, or to judge it by leaving it to its self-chosen death. "God requireth that which is past"-"the time past of our life." Equally to the saved and unsaved will the words one day have a stirring application,-"This night thy soul shall be required of thee." God forbid that any one of us should be addressed, in that day, as-"Thou fool!" Rather be it our lot, when the voice of God shall call, to reply to it with the same confidence as that of the child Samuel, who with a true faith, and obedient heart, and a love that knew no fear, rushed into the presence of his father, saying, "Here am I, for thou didst call me!"

"And now, what have we to say with respect to this strange, solemn thing—Time?—that men do with it through life just

what the apostles did for one precious irreparable hour of it, in the garden of Gethsemane—they go to sleep! Have you ever seen those marble statues, in some public square, or garden, which art has so fashioned into a perennial fountain, that through the lips, or through the hands, the clear water flows into a perpetual stream, on and on for ever; and the marble stands there—passive, cold, making no effort to arrest the gliding water? It is so that time flows through the hands of men—swift, never pausing, till it has run itself out; and there is the man petrified into a marble sleep, not feeling what it is which is passing away for ever! It is so, just so, that the destiny of nine men out of ten accomplishes itself, slipping away from them—aimless, useless, till it is too late."

May not the children of God apply to themselves, in some measure, these sentiments of stirring reproof? Have we not, too often, allowed time to slip through our hands, when those hands might have arrested the vital current, and turned it to living water for our own refreshment, and that of others? How much of this precious capital have we thrown away! With an improvident expenditure the golden coin has been squandered—our substance wasted! What opportunities have we lost! What privileges forfeited! What work for God neglected! How many precious hours have we given to enervating repose, which might have been spent amidst hallowed communings, or in holy and blessed activities! How often has our absence from the sanctuary, or the prayermeeting, rehearsed in our experience the mournful event in the history of Thomas, who was not with his fellow-disciples when the Lord appeared! How many tears have fallen which our sympathy might have helped to dry up! How many hearts have been wounded which we have failed to heal! How many souls perished without hope whose last dark hours might have been illumined, had we carried to them the torch of eternal truth—the lamp of immortality! And all this unimproved and unredeemed "past" is gone from us, to

[■] Robertson.

return no more for ever. "Like water spilt on the ground," it cannot be gathered up again. And the time which we now have is passing. Time present will soon be time past!

"Like the rivers, time is gliding;
Brightest hours have no abiding:
Use the golden moments well.
Life is wasting,
Death is hasting:
Death consigns to heaven or hell."

The secret of all the failures which have been enumerated is expressed by the apostle in one word—self-will—the will of the Gentiles." Man doing his own will is the history of the world's sin and woe. The devil's success in Eden was effected by his giving to man a will of his own. The whole of the earth's subsequent history, as regards moral evil, is the history of that will in action—the conduct of those who find it no easy thing to "recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

The workings of this will are as manifold and varied as are the phases of human character. They show themselves alike in the animal, the intellectual, the secular, and the religious nature of man. The children of God know but little of the various and subtle forms which self-will assumes. Adoption into the family of God does not exempt us from its insidious workings. So long as we carry about with us a body of sin and of death, so long shall we need the words of admonition, written by an apostle, and addressed to believers, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, [will] that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

What a sublime example is presented for our imitation in the character and life of Jesus, of perfect and spotless conformity to the will of God! "He pleased not himself." He had meat to eat that the world knew not of. His language was, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me:" "I delight to do thy will, O God."

"The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" asks us to let the past "suffice to have wrought the will of the Gentiles," and in beginning a new year to renew our early vows, our first love, our young and ardent zeal, to be henceforth inspired with the holy ambition to be "conformed to the image of his Son."

To attain unto this we must yield our wills to God. Satan conquered man by man doing Satan's will. Christ conquered Satan by doing God's will. And every accession to the Redeemer's kingdom, and every diminution of Satanic power, and every measure of increase of the fruits of the Spirit, in the life of the new-born soul—of love, joy, and peace—is the consequence of man surrendering his will to God.

My brother! what art thou living for? for God or for self? If for God, thy being is encircled by a halo of glory which shall be ever expanding and widening with the revolving ages of eternity. But if thou art living for self, thy life must prove a failure, and thine eternity the dark covering of eternal shame and everlasting contempt.

G. HUNT JACKSON.

Subject: Paul a Prisoner.

"For this cause I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles."—Ephes. iii. 1.

Inalysis of Homily the Seben Hundred und Forty-Second.

TE have here—

I. A GREAT MAN IN PRISON.

Prisons generally contain the lowest and vilest of men—
the refuse of humanity. But they have often contained a
very different class of men, the noblest and best; the men
who by reason of extraordinary power of mind or greatness
of soul have come into collision with the beliefs and habits
of the people. Joseph, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Peter

Paul, Jesus Christ, all were imprisoned. Some of the great leaders in past reformations both of thought and conduct have been imprisoned. Socrates, Galileo, Bunyan, and many of the best men in the Nonconformist movement of 1662 are examples. These cases afford a mournful example of the blindness and corruption of men.

First: Men are generally too blind to recognise contemporary greatness. When the grass grows over his grave, and he is beyond the voice either of praise or blame, the worth of the great man is recognised; but very frequently not until then.

Second: Men are generally too corrupt to bear with a great man whom they cannot understand. They cannot comprehend the mystery of a noble life, so they put it out of their sight; confine it as a dangerous thing. This spirit is not yet dead. Blindness and corruption are rife amongst us now.

II. A GREAT MAN IN PRISON FOR ENGAGING IN THE HIGHEST SERVICE. "I, Paul, am the the prisoner of Jesus Christ." Again, he says, "I, the prisoner in the Lord." He was a prisoner in the service of the Lord Jesus. Prisoners for debt, crime, &c., abound. Prisoners of war are numerous. But here is a man made prisoner for labouring in the highest cause. The progress of the cause of Christ is synonymous with the progress of humanity in everything which constitutes its well-being. Paul was labouring in this cause. Yet they imprisoned him; and imprisoned him for so doing. Paul said things which clashed with the old notions of the men of his time, and, without fairly examining his statements, they hurried him to prison. Men now do not like their stereotyped theories disturbed.

III. A GREAT MAN IN PRISON FOR TAKING THE MOST BENE-VOLENT POSITION IN THE HIGHEST SERVICE. "For this cause," i.e., for holding and proclaiming the views set forth in the preceding chapter. "On behalf of you, Gentiles." Paul was suffering for others. He was imprisoned for proclaiming these three things. (1) That when the Jews rejected the Gospel God withdrew it from them.—See examples in the "Acts of the Apostles." (2) That God willed that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles. (3) That God had called him to this work of preaching to the Gentiles.

First: Paul's position was most philosophic. The religion for humanity must be congruous, not with any special type or nation of the race, but with human nature in all ages and everywhere. The Gospel to save man must meet the needs of all and be free to all.

Second: Paul's position was most benevolent. There was no narrowness in it. It recognised the common brotherhood of the race; but the Jews were too narrow, prejudiced, and bigoted to allow this, so they sent Paul to prison. Hyper-Calvinists have just the same spirit now. They revile the men who offer the blessings of the Gospel freely to all men.

IV. THE IMPRISONMENT OF A GREAT MAN OVERRULED BY GOD FOR THE GOOD OF HIS CHURCH. In the prison Paul wrote this Epistle. Had he not been a prisoner he, most probably, would have spent all his time and energy in active labour; and none of the precious thoughts made known in such labour may have been preserved for succeeding ages. But from the prison he contributes to the religious thought and spiritual life of the church in all succeeding ages everywhere. From the prison there proceeded a letter to bless, not only the Ephesian Church, but the world also. Observe in this,—

First: The grandeur of Paul's spirit. It was free. It went forth amid the churches. "Stone walls did not a prison make," &c. It was benevolent. He did not moan over his own condition; but was full of the noblest solicitude for others.

Second: The providence of God. Out of evil He evolves good. Paul writes in prison. Bunyan writes in prison.

Thus God maketh the wrath of man to praise Him. In this way the devil involuntarily is promoting the progress of humanity. In His providence, God watches over both the individual and the Church. He strengthens Paul in the prison, and sends a glorious letter to the Church at Ephesus.

Portsmouth.

WILLIAM JONES.

Subject: The Unjust Judge.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."—Luke xviii. 1—8.

Inalysis of Fomily the Seben Jundred and Forty-Third.

"HIS parable has its key hanging at the door," says an old and quaint expositor. And so it has, for the point to be illustrated is stated at the outset, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

We see in this parable three things; the picture of a distressed world—a recognised deliverer—and a successful invocation.

I. Here is a picture of a distressed world. "The widow" here may fairly be regarded as representing humanity everywhere as afflicted by the fall.

First, it is desolate. It is a "widow" left alone without its loving companion and protector. Few of all the miserable conditions in life are more pitiable than the widowed one, left with a bleeding heart to struggle alone in a cold, selfish world. Man's condition as a sinner is poor, miserable, blind, and naked.

Secondly, it is oppressed. The widow had an "adversary"—some hard-hearted creature, who took advantage of her weakness, and outraged her rights. Fallen man has an adversary. His adversary is the devil. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter v. 8.) This is an adversary mighty, malignant, cunning, unremitting. Do you pity the poor "widow," and have you no pity for a desolate and oppressed world lying in wickedness?

II. Here is a picture of a RECOGNISED DELIVERER. In the society to which this widow belonged there was a man appointed for the purpose of helping the oppressed. There was a "judge." From Deut. xvi. 18, we learn that the Israelites were to have judges in all the gates of their towns, who were bound to judge the people with just judgment, without respect of persons. Such town tribunal existed in the days of our Lord. (Matt. v. 21, 22.) These judges were specially commanded by God to take widows and orphans under their protection. (Isa. i. 23; Jer. i. 6.) Samuel was a fine example of a good judge: "I am old and grey headed; behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken?" &c.. &c.

There was nothing good, however, about this "judge" but his office; that was divine. Both his official and personal character were bad in the extreme. He was an unjust judge, and neither "feared God nor respected man." (1.) It is in his office, not in his character, that he represents the Great Deliverer of the race. Just as in the circle of that widow there was one whose office it was to help, so there is in the great world of men One whose office it is to deliver—namely, the Redeeming God. Unlike the judge, He is not only righteous, but full of tenderness and compassion, able and willing to save. To his seat, the throne of grace, we must repair for help. (2.) It is in his unhastiness, not in his reluctance, that he represents the Great Deliverer of the race. God appears to us to move very slowly. How long He seemed

to disregard His people in Egypt. How long in preparing the way for Christ. How slowly the Gospel seems to move. He is not in a hurry: He has plenty of time, &c.

III. Here is a picture of SUCCESSFUL INVOCATION. This widow said, "Avenge me of mine adversary!" "and he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself. Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me." Her success depended not upon the justice or mercy of the judge, for he had none, but simply on her importunity-selfishness moved him at last. It is not the DUTY of prayer that is taught here, nature teaches that man has an ineradicable instinct for it, an instinct which danger has never failed to excite! Hence the prayer of theoretic Atheists in peril. Nor is it the privilege of prayer that is here taught, the philosophy of mind and the experience of the good in all ages teach that; the point here is the certain efficacy of importunate prayer. Three remarks may serve to throw light upon the subject: first, importunity is the essence of all true prayers. Prayer does not consist in words or occasional services—prayer is an abiding and deeply-felt consciousness of dependence upon God. Hence it is something "without season." A man that does not always pray never prays. Secondly, importunity is an essential qualification for the enjoyment of Divine favours. Unless we are brought to feel the need of a thing we shall neither properly value nor rightly use it. The Syro-Phœnician mother is a case in point. Thirdly, importunity insures the interposition of Heaven. This point Christ here teaches by a sort of à fortiori argument. The famous John Howe fully illustrates this in a discourse on this text. He points out the difference between the petitioned -the petition-and the petitioner. The gist of the argument here implied is to show the certainty that God will answer the importunate prayer of His people. Their prayer is "day and night"-it is the breathing spirit of the soul, and this is sure to be answered—in truth, is answered every day.

Biblical Criticism.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .-- EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chap. xix.—1. And it came to pass, while Apollos was in Corinth, that Paul, going through the upper regions, came to Ephesus and found certain disciples.

- 2. And he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they [said] to him, On the contrary, we did not even hear whether the Holy Ghost was.
- 3. And he said, To what, then, were ye baptized? And they said, To the baptism of John.
- 4. And Paul said, John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people, that they should believe on Him who was coming after him, that is, on Jesus.
- 5. And having heard, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.
- 6. And when Paul had put hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.
 - 7. And all the men [aropes] were about twelve.
- 8. And entering into the synagogue, he spake boldly for three months, disputing and persuading concerning the kingdom of God.
- 9. But when certain were hardened and believed not, speaking evil of the way before the multitude, going from them he separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus.
- 10. And this was done for two years, so that all the dwellers in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.
- 11. And God did extraordinary mighty works by the hands of Paul.
- 12. So that to the sick there were brought from his body (properly, skin) napkins or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out.
 - 13. But certain also of the wandering Jews, exorcists,

undertook to name over those that had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, I adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth.

- 14. And there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chiefpriest, doing this.
- 15. And the evil spirit answering said, Jesus I know, and Paul I am acquainted with; but who are ye?
- 16. And the man in whom was the evil spirit, leaping upon them, having got the mastery of both, prevailed against them, so that naked and wounded they fled out of that house.
- 17. And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks that were dwelling in Ephesus, and there fell fear upon all of them, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.
- 18. And many of them that had believed came confessing and announcing their practices.
- 19. And considerable numbers of those that had practised magical doings, having brought the books together, burned [them] up before all; and reckoned together the values of them, and found fifty thousand of silver.
 - 20. Thus mightily the Lord's word grew and prevailed.
- 21. When these things were fulfilled, Paul settled in the spirit, having gone through Macedonia and Achaia, to journey to Jerusalem, saying, after I have been there, I must see Rome also.
- 22. And having sent into Macedonia two of those that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus, himself remained a time at Asia.
- 23. And there came to pass at that season a disturbance not small concerning that way.
- 24. For a certain man, Demetrius by name, a silversmith, making silver temples of Artemis, occasioned to the artisans' earnings not small.
- 25. Whom having assembled, and the workers about such like things, he said, sirs [ἄνδρες], ye understand that from this art is the wealth to us.
 - 26. And ye see and hear that not only of Ephesus, but

almost of all Asia, this Paul having persuaded, has perverted a considerable crowd, saying that they are not gods which are made by hands.

- 27. And not only is this portion for us in danger of coming to contempt, but also the sanctuary of the great goddess Artemis to be reckoned for nothing, and for her greatness to come even to be destroyed, whom the whole of Asia and the world worships.
- 28. And having heard [this] and growing full of wrath, they cried, saying, Great [is] Artemis of the Ephesians.
- 29. And the city was filled with the confusion; and they rushed with one accord into the theatre, having snatched Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, fellow-travellers of Paul.
- 30. And Paul counselling to enter in to the people, the disciples permitted him not.
- 31. And certain also of the Asiarchs, being his friends, having sent to him, besought [him] not to give himself into the theatre.
- 32. Some then cried one thing, some another; for the assembly was confused, and the most knew not for what sake they were come together.
- 33. And they drew Alexander out of the crowd, the Jews thrusting him forth. And Alexander having waved the hand, desired to plead for himself to the people.
- 34. But they knowing that he was a Jew, one voice arose from all, crying for about two hours, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.
- 35. And the Recorder having quelled the crowd, says: Sirs [ἄνρδες] of Ephesus, who is there of men that knows not that the city of Ephesians is temple-guardian of the great Artemis, and of that which fell from Zeus!
- 36. These things then not to be gainsaid, it is necessary for you to be quiet, and to do nothing rash
- 37. For ye have brought these men [ἄνδρας] neither robbers of sanctuaries, nor blaspheming your god.
 - 38. If then Demetrius, and the artisans with him, have

a complaint against any man, assizes are held, and there are proconsuls; let them summon each other.

39. But if ye seek something further, in a lawful

assembly it shall be resolved.

- 40. For we are even in danger to be summoned concerning the uproar of this day, there being no reason about which we shall be able to render account of this concourse.
- 41. And having spoken these [words] he dismissed the assembly.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

A PARABOLIC PICTURE OF ISRAEL.

"And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, What is the vine-tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burnt. Is it meet for any work? Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned? Therefore thus saith the Lord God, As the vine-tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them: and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them. And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord God."—Ezek. xv. 1—8.

THE subject of this chapter is the incorrigible depravity of the Hebrew people, including both the men of Israel and of Judah. had defeated the ends of their high calling, and exposed themselves to the righteous judgments of Heaven. following chapter exhibits the same subject at greater length, and in more minute detail. This chapter, which is our text, is a parabolic representation of the Jewish people. From it we infer three general truths.

I. THAT GOD HAS PLACED SOME SECTIONS OF THE HUMAN RACE UNDER SPECIAL CULTURE. Their condition is analogous to that of the "vine" planted in a suitable soil, well-guarded

and seduously trained. First: This was the case with the Jews. They are frequently compared to the vine. (Deut. xxxii. 32; Isa. i.; Psa. lxxx; Jer. ii. 21.) Secondly: This is the case with Christendom. Thirdly: This is especially the case with Great Britain.

We infer-

II. That those sections of the race under special culture ARE. WHETHER FRUITFUL OR UNFRUITFUL, WIDELY DISTIN-GUISHED FROM ALL OTHERS. Whether they prove fruitful or unfruitful they are distinguished. First: If fruitful, they are distinguished by valuableness. They are a "vine"-a tree producing rich clusters of choicest and most delicious fruit,-fruit which vieldeth wine to "cheer the heart of God and man." What on earth is of higher value than a godly life? "The price of religion is above rubies," &c. Secondly: If unfruitful, they are distinby auished worthlessness. "What is the vine-tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it

meet for any work?" The description here given of the "vine" as being burnt at two ends, and its middle on flame. represents the state of the Jewish people at this moment. Ten of their tribes had been carried away into Syria, and the other two were in distress, and exposed to danger. Unless the "vine" produce grapes it is more worthless than most other trees of the You cannot manuforest. facture furniture out of it. construct ships, or houses; unless it grows grapes it is fit for nothing but the fire. If the Jews were not religious, they were contemptible as compared with other In antiquity of orinations. gin, extent of territory, abundance of resources, attainments in arts and sciences, they were not to be compared with Egypt, Ethiopia, and Babylon. If professors of religion are not fruitful in good works, they are the most worthless men in society.

We infer—

III. That the distinction between those under special culture and those who are not IS RECOGNISED AND RETRIBUTED BY GOD. God sees the difference between the fruitful and unfruitful vine, and between the unfruitful vine and the other trees of the forest. And God marks the difference in his

judgment. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; As the vine-tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from one fire. and another fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them. And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord God." This menace had a terrible fulfilment in the history of the Jews. The doom, however, that befell them is but a faint picture of the doom that awaits a godless professor. "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine. and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." &c.-Matt. vii. 26-27

GOD THE HABITATION OF SOULS.

"Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort."—Psa. lxxi. 3.

This is a very brief but very significant prayer. It implies two things:—

I. A SENSE OF THE SOUL'S NEED. The soul needs a "habitation." It is a homeless wanderer. First, it wants a

home for protection. It requires a protector from the scorching of the sun, from the fury of the storm, from the assaults of the enemy. How exposed is a guilty soul! Secondly, it wants a home for comfort. Home is the scene of comfort. But the guilty soul is comfortless. It lacks. the comforts of nourishment. shelter, society, &c. Thirdly. it wants a home for settledness. It is a restless wanderer. is wearied of its pilgrimage. It craves for a settlement. The prayer implies,

II. A FAITH IN GOD'S SUF-FICIENCY. God is just the "habitation" which the soul wants, affording security, comfort, and permanent residence. First, God is an accessible habitation. The doors of infinite love are ever open to welcome all who come. This habitation is ever near to us. Secondly, God is a secure habitation. Those who are in Him are safe from all dangers and all foes. "God is our refuge and strength." Thirdly. God is a blessed habitation. In Him is found infinitely more than all we want to perfect us in everlasting bliss. Fourthly. God is an enduring habitation. "The eternal God. is our refuge," &c. Return, O prodigal, to thy Father's house.

TWO ASTOUNDING EVILS.

"Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.—Jer. ii. 12, 13.

In this chapter, Jeremiah is charged to remind the Jews of their metropolis, of the consecration with which they had served Jehovah in the early part of their history, and the consequent protection which they enjoyed. Jehovah then appeals to them in a most forcible way, as to whether any reason for dissatisfaction in his service had been found in Him, and whether, on the contrary. He had not loaded them with his benefits. then describes their ingratitude, and denounces punishment. The text implies that their conduct was so unexampled in wickedness that it was fitted to fill the universe with absolute consternation. "Be astonished. O ye heavens," &c. The two astounding evils at which the heavens are to be "amazed and horrified," area departure from the true source of blessedness and a fruitless toil for worthless enjoyments. The former involves the latter—for to forsake God is to plunge into futile endeavours after happiness. To forsake God does not,

of course, mean departure from his presence, that is, utterly impossible; nor an exit from his rule, that is equally impossible; but it means an apostacy of heart, a moral alienation of soul. these two evils in men are most astounding. They are enough to fill the universe "Be aswith consternation. tonished, O ye heavens," &c. This is a noble instance of bold and impassioned prosopopeia similar expressions we have elsewhere. (Isa. i 2; also Deut. xxxii. 1.) It is language that expresses feelings of immeasurable depth and burning intensity. There are three things in perpetration of these the two evils that may well fill the universe with ment.

I. THE FORCE OF HUMAN FREEDOM. Is not man's power to break away from the eternal Fountain of his being truly wonderful ? The mightiest rivers cannot break away from their source, nor the greatest planets from their centre, but man has the power to break fromthe Centre away and Fountain of his being. God deals with his moral creatures according to the principles of freedom with which He has endowed them. He does not bind them by force to Himself. They are left free to stand or fall.

First: This treedom is a matter of personal conscious-All men feel that they are uncoerced and free. is the invincible and ultimate argument in favour of the doctrine of human responsibility. Secondly: This freedom invests human existence with transcendent importance. links men to moral government, and renders them responsible for all their activities. It makes them members of the great moral empire of the universe.

Another thing in the perpetration of this evil that may fill the universe with amazement is—

II. THE ENORMITY OF HU-MAN WICKEDNESS. What an amount of the grossest iniquity is involved in these two evils. First: What ingratitude. Kindness, by the law of gratitude, should always bind man to the benefactor. kindness God has always shown to man. What especial kindness to the Jews; but still more wonderful kindness to us. Secondly: What injustice. Every principle of justice requires them to keep themselves in close and loyal fellowship with Him. This is demanded on the ground of proprietorship and love. Thirdly: What impiety. What a daring hardihood is involved in the effort to turn away from God. "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this."

The last thing in the perpetration of these two that may well fill the universe with amazement is—

III. THE EGREGIOUSNESS OF See the folly. HUMAN FOLLY. First: In withdrawing from the satisfying, to toil for the unsatisfying. God is the "fountain of living waters." All the blessedness of the universe streams out from Him. He is a fountain inexhaustible; ever flowing, always free, the only fountain of Now, this founhappiness. tain is left—what for? toil for the unsatisfying drops of earthly pleasure. "They have hewed for themselves out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." The reference is here to receptacles which were common in the East for holding rainwater. Springs and fountains were scarce there, but cisterus abounded. But the cisterns here are "broken cisterns." The drops that fell into them would run off, and these broken cisterns they had to hew for themselves. What worthless toil! Yet this is what sinners are doing in all their efforts for happiness apart from God. Secondly: In withdrawing from the abundant, to toil for the scanty. Leaving the "fountain" for the "cistern" — the broken cistern too, in which there is but little water, and that impure and fast running out.

Well may the heavens be astonished and wonder at the freedom, iniquity, and folly which they witness every age and every day, developed in the history of our race.

THE WORLD OVERCOME.

"And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.—1 John v. 4.

THESE words contain three points of thought.

I. THE MIGHTY AGGREGATE OF HUMAN EVIL, "THE WORLD." The world here does not mean the physical world, the scientific world, the commercial world, the artistic world, but the word is frequently employed in the New Testament for all that is morally bad on earth. It stands for the grand assemblage of all evils of all kinds — moral, social, political, religious,evils in thought, feeling. habit, in institutions systems — evil everywhere in all forms. This is the "world."

II. The mighty aggregate of human evil OVERCOME. A "victory" over it is attained. The whole world of evil is to be destroyed; its "heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and its elements melt

with fervent heat." The mighty Colossus shall be struck and shattered, and the winds of the divine Spirit shall bear away every vestige, so that there shall be found "no place for it." All the errors, selfishness, impieties, &c., of this earth will come to an end.

III. The mighty aggregate of human evil overcome by FAITH. Does "faith" here not mean subjective, but objective? In other words, does it mean personal belief in the Gospel, or the Gospel itself? This Gospel is, indeed, the weapon. It is the stone cut out of the mountain that is to shiver the Colossus—it is the executioner that is to crucify the world—nail it to the cross, &c.—the Gospel, not legislation, not philosophy, not natural religion, priestly ritualisms. But it is the Gospel as believed by human souls. It is not the Gospel in print, not the Gospel in theologies, but the Gospel in living men — the Gospel "made flesh," that it is to do the work.*

THE BARREL OF MEAL AND THE CRUSE OF OIL.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the

^{*} See Homilist, series 1, vol. i.: "Wants of the World and the Weakness of the Church."

Lord, which he spake by Elijah."
—1 Kings xvii. 16.

This miracle illustrates—

I. A PRINCIPLE IN CONNEC-TION WITH ECONOMY-

For what can so well define economy as making much out of little? Where it exists there will seldom be absent "the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil." Destitution is sometimes an awful necessity; but for the most part it is selfincurred. The greatest generosity would often be to teach economy. See how Jesus teaches it to men, even in the presence of abounding plenty, and whilst giving proof that the resources of infinitude are behind him! And that gathering up the fragments that nothing be lost, is just what the great God is doing evermore. The economy of nature is as The startling as uniform. gas flung off by the vegetable world-do you think it is wasted? It becomes a source of your health and life! And the gas that you exhale in breathing is not wasted; it becomes food for the trees, and that Whence rain that refreshes the face of the earth? It is the result of economy, of God's treasuring up the water, absorbed by the sun. all the refuse of this earth that the rivers bear to the ocean, there is nothing wasted. Out of it God is making the bones of fishes, coral reefs, &c. And if the principle on which the Deity is managing the great palace of nature were taken into the homes of destitution that abound, there might be less drunkenness, &c., but there would oftener be "the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil."

II. A PRINCIPLE IN CON-NECTION WITH PROVIDENCE.

As a rule, when, as I have hinted, economy may be vain, God's special care will insure for the good "the barrel of meal," &c. Sometimes, indeed, the noblest have to pass to where the Lamb, who is in the midst of them, shall feed them, from tables breadless, and garrets fireless, &c. But that is not the rule, for what means this "Thy bread shall be given," &c. ? And this, "First seek ye the kingdom of God," &c? Expect opulence, and there may be disappointment; look for the divine care, and "the barrel of meal," &c.

III. A PRINCIPLE IN CONNECTION WITH PIETY. "Man liveth not by bread alone,"&c. We never starve in spiritual life for lack of help. There is always bread enough in our Father's house, and to spare, if we will only take it. When we fail in duty, &c., it is because we ignore the bread

of life. But, although there is enough and to spare, just enough is given us. "As thy day thy strength shall be." Hence we often wonder how we shall pass through difficulties, trials, temptations that stare us in the face. But we do get through, and it is because "the barrel of meal." &c.

IV. A PRINCIPLE IN CON-NECTION WITH GENEROSITY. This woman gave and got. But let us remember that she gave unselfishly, and not in order to get. Moreover, she gave to her utmost. She gave to a prophet, in the name of a prophet, and she received a prophet's reward. ward is not always a material one; it is sometimes sympathy, sometimes the benediction of poverty, and always the smile of the soul and God.

Preston. H. J. MARTYN.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."—John iii. 14, 15.

I. AN HISTORICAL FACT DIVINELY ACKNOWLEDGED. Look at the fact itself. (Num. xxi. 4—9.) Then at the interence the acknowledgment of it supplies—Christ's entire belief in the Old Testament Scriptures.

II. AN INTIMATE CONNECTION CLEARLY REVEALED: 1. Each divinely appointed. 2. Each met a terrible necessity. 3. Benefit in each case secured by faith.

III. A GREAT NECESSITY IN-SISTED UPON. "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

This must refer to His death. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." Christ frequently directed attention to the event. The types of old were significant of this. The prophecies included the same. The apostles preached the truth, and held it forth as the central fact of redemption.

Without His death we could have no life.

IV. A BLESSED PURPOSE CROWNING ALL. 1. A calamity from which we may be delivered. 2. A blessedness to which we may attain. 3. The means of deliverance. 4. The universality of the statement. 5. The only way of mercy and salvation.

Bristol. John James.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL MINISTRY.

"For neither did his brethren believe in him."—John vii. 5. WE have here two things.

I. THE UNSUCCESSFULNESS OF OUR SAVIOUR'S MINISTRY. We shall notice—

1. The causes of an unsuccessful ministry. (1.) Ignorance of Scripture truths. (2.) Lack of effective expression. (3.) Want of harmony between the minister's private life and public teaching. (4.) Absence of a prayerful spirit.

Christ knew the Scriptures. He spoke as never man spake. His private life was blameless. He went about doing good, and was mighty in prayer. Still his brethren did not believe in Him.

2. The Lessons which our

Saviour's unsuccessful ministry suggest. (1.) That a man should not always be held responsible for the unreligiousness of his family. (2.) A true ministry may be unsuccessful when the greatest success might be expected. (3.) Success is no proof of the true value of a ministry.

II. Infidelity existing in the most favourable circumstances to belief.

This may be because of—
1. Prejudice. 2. Intellectual pride. 3. Hardness of heart.

D. Lewis.

Scripture and Science.

(No. I.)

Subject: Science in Relation to the Tempter of Eve.

It is not my intention just now to consider all the points of interest which are connected with the fall of man, though science throws considerable light upon some of them. The fact of the temptation and fall; the way in which it was brought about; its immediate effect upon the temporal and spiritual condition of Adam and Eve; the extent and the nature of its influence upon mankind in general, and especially upon the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and the physical conditions of the earth, must be left for future consideration. At present let us confine our attention to the tempter. Notice,

- I. THE DESCRIPTION GIVEN, IN THE MOSAIC NARRATIVE, OF THE TEMPTER OF EVE.
- 1. The tempter was known, when the record was made, as the Nachash.

 2. It was distinguished from all the beasts of the field by (a) belonging to a different class of animals, or beings, or (b) by being superior to any of them in intelligence, and especially in craft. It was remarkably skilful. The Hebrew word, 'arum, rendered subtil in our authorised version, denotes that which is high, from ram, lofty, or high. Hence

it refers to that which is lofty physically—a mountain; to that which is lofty mentally—(a) the proud, and hence, wicked; and, (b) the wise or crafty. Symmachus and Aquila render it wicked—πανούργος, and the Targum of the Pseudo Jonathan has, "hakkim le bish, wise in reference to evil." The Septuagint, however, have φρονιμώτατος, most prudent. Onkelos and Saadiah understood the word in the same sense, and the word is used in a good sense in Prov. xii. 16, 23; xiii. 16. In any case, we must conclude from the narrative, that the Nachash was a being, animal or otherwise, which was noted for its wickedness or for its wisdom.

- 3. The Nachash had also the gift of speech, if the narrative be one of an objective historic occurrence. If the tempter was seen, then, no doubt, words were heard. If, however, the narrative records what never was in an objective form, but was a mere subjective phenomenon, then the tempter was neither seen nor heard, nor did it belong to the animal creation; still was it capable of originating in the mind of Eve a train of thought.
- 4. The object of the creature mentioned as the tempter was to lead Eve to sin, and so determined was he to accomplish his vile purpose, that he misrepresented God, and made a false assertion, "Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof . . . ye shall be as gods." 5. God's heaviest curse came upon the tempter, the Nachash (ver. 14). 6. A change was apparently effected in the physical structure of the Nachash, as well as in its food. "Upon its belly" it was to go, and "dust" was to be its food all the days of its life (verse 14). 7. An inveterate hatred has existed ever since the fall of man, between mankind and the offspring of the tempter (verse 15). 8. The posterity of the tempter have to be destroyed by the seed of the woman, while the latter is to be injured by the former. In 1 Cor. xi. 3, St. Paul refers to the tempter as the Ophis, or serpent, evidently using the word which he found in the Septuagint as a translation of Nachash, & δφis. We may now consider,

II. Some of the most popular interpretations given of the Mosaic narrative.

1. The first explanation supposes the narrative to be an allegory, the serpent denoting propensity to evil (Phillipson), or mere pleasure (Philo, Clemens Alex., &c.), or onesided and uninformed understanding (Bunsen). In this explanation the tree, the garden, and the serpent had no objective existence; they were mere symbols or pictorial representations of mental states, or modes, acts, or desires. Science has no fault to find with this explanation, for by it the whole narrative is removed from the field of science. There are great objections however to this interpretation, each having weight by itself, but all, when taken together, necessitate its rejection. Among these may be men-

tioned (a) the fact that St. Paul speaks of the serpent (1 Cor. xi. 3) and the temptation, as if the narrative in Genesis was in every sense historic. (b) There is no reference, in any part of Scripture, to any allegorical record of the fall; (c) nor is there the slighest clue, in any part, to the meaning of the fable, if such it is. But the chief objection to this explanation is, (d) that it destroys the historic character of the whole Book of Genesis, and makes it equal, in point of fact, to "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," in which case Adam and Eve. Cain and Abel, Enoch and Noah, Abraham and Lot, Isaac and Jacob, the Deluge, the destruction of Sodom, the famine in Canaan, and the fame of Joseph, are fictitious names and occurrences, having no more reality than Pliable and Obstinate, Help and Worldly Wiseman, the Slough of Despond, and Doubting Castle. If the narrative of the fall be fictitious, such must be that of the creation, the biography of the sons of Adam, and all other events recorded in the book of Genesis, as there is not a word anywhere in the book to distinguish the allegorical from the historical.

The symbolical explanation seems to me to have originated in the difficulty of giving a rational interpretation to the narrative, combined with the tendency which characterized the early interpreters to find in

every historic record a mystical meaning.

2. The second explanation to be mentioned, is that which supposes the tempter to be a literal serpent and nothing more. This explanation has arisen from (a) the absence, in the narrative, of any specific or definite reference to any being but the serpent, (b) from the absence of any hint as to the duality of the tempter, and (c) chiefly from the fact that the greater part of the curse came upon the animal. This would have been unjust, and therefore impossible, if the serpent had been the unconsenting instrument of another being.

Notwithstanding all this, the explanation must be rejected, because the narrative attributes to the serpent what is not found to belong to any mere animal, such as extraordinary skill or craft, the gift of reason and of speech, as well as a wicked desire to lead Eve into sin.

3. The third explanation supposes the whole narrative in Genesis to refer to this individual serpent alone as a duality—as "possessed of the devil." This serpent has become a demoniac, like the swine of the Gadarines. This reptile was an incarnation of the evil spirit. It was animated by Satan, as Baalam's ass was by the angel of the Lord. Milton represents the serpent as meeting Eve in her solitary walk and speaking to her. The reasoning woman being surprised at the speaking and reasoning power of the snake, asked the cause of it, and was told that the power was imparted by the tree of knowledge.

"To pluck and eat my fill I spared not; for, such pleasure till that hour, At feed or fountain, never had I found. Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward powers; and speech
Wanted not long; tho' to this shape retained."

Paradise Lost, b. ix. 593—601.

This explanation harmonises with science, because the subject is removed from the field of science by the introduction of a miracle, to make a serpent another creature than a serpent, by making it an incarnation of the evil spirit. It has been said that the occurrence of the article in the narrative with the word serpent—the serpent, han nachash—denotes that this was not an ordinary one; the article, however, in Hebrew, has no such absolute significance, though it denotes emphasis, for the words the serpent—han nachash, are used of other serpents, in Num. xxi. 9: "And it came to pass that if a serpent,"—Heb., "the serpent—had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

The chief objection to this explanation arises from its want of harmony with the words of the sacred writers, for a seed or progeny of the serpent are mentioned as well as of the woman (ver. 15), which necessitates the propagation of that remarkable species, and proves the individual not to be unique; besides, the relation of that individual serpent to Eve is said (in prediction) to be similar to that ever to exist between mankind and the offspring of the serpent.

4. The fourth explanation supposes the sacred narrative to refer, in the first instance, to the serpent or some animal all through, and to Satan, the real tempter, in a higher and fuller sense. The animal had before the fall superior wisdom, the power of speech and of reason, and walked in an erect attitude or had limbs, but was deprived of these in consequence of the curse recorded. This has been the most popular explanation in every age, and is now received by the majority of Bible readers. Josephus says (Ant. I. cap. i. 4) that all animals had originally the gift of speech, and that the serpent was on very friendly terms with Adam and Eve; but as a punishment for tempting man to sin, God "deprived the serpent of speech, . . . inserted poison under its tongue; made it an enemy to man . . And when He had deprived it of the use of its feet, He made it go rolling on and dragging itself upon the ground." Delitzch also says, that "The punishment of the serpent, as all antiquity understood the sentence, consists in this, that its mode of motion and its form were changed. . . The serpent was before made otherwise; now, with its fiery colour, its forked vibrating tongue, its poison-distilling teeth, its dreadful hiss, its arrow-like motion, like a flash of light, its occasionally fascinating glance, it is, as it were, the embodiment of the diabolical sin, and the divine curse. Its present condition is the consequence of a divine transformation." Whiston, the well-known translator of Josephus, agrees with all this,

and adds, "that the more perfect animals do not want the organs of speech at this day." Ridgley agrees in believing serpents to have walked in an erect position. Matthew Henry, and a host of other commentators, have held the same opinion.

This explanation is the most absurd, though it be the most generally received. It has no foundation in Scripture, and is declared impossible by the simplest facts of natural history. Serpents are (a) now what they were many centuries before the formation of man, as we shall shortly see; (b) are neither wise nor crafty, much less the most wise or "subtil;" (c) are about the least capable of articulation; (d) have no enmity to man; (e) eat no dust; and (f) did not injure the Messiah—the seed of the woman—nor were they destroyed by Him. Finding it impossible to hold any longer to this opinion, another explanation has been proposed, and

5. The fifth explanation supposes the narrative in Genesis to be partly applicable to the animal serpent, and partly applicable to the indwelling demon. Mr. Duns has endeavoured in his "Biblical Natural Science," to harmonise this theory with the facts of Natural History. The case of the serpent is a parallel to that of Balaam's ass, The craft, the speech, the bad design, and the falsehood attributed to the serpent, refer to the spirit of evil within it: but though the reptile was the unwilling or unconsenting instrument of Satan, a part of the curse is inflicted upon it, "upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all thy days." No physical change is, however, supposed to have been effected; the serpent always having been, physically, what it is; the change had reference to its relation to man. Its form, which was once a memorial of the skill and power of its maker, was henceforth to be a memorial of its degradation. Before the fall the serpent, like any other animal, was to be admired as the work of God; but now it is to be despised and regarded as an abominable thing. The innocent creature has become thus, by an appointment of a just Gcd, an object of contempt.

Objections of a most formidable character exist, as it seems to me, to this explanation; and (a) there is nothing in the narrative to imply any change in the object addressed. What is said is said wholly to one being, and of one, the serpent, or Nachash. If this was a double being, we have nothing to indicate what part of the narrative refers to this or that part of the duality. Our guide is simply our own fancy or taste, or the difficulty of applying some expressions to this or that part of the compound being; this difficulty will depend upon our notions, culture, or inclination. If this licence be granted in the interpretation of every scriptural narrative, the Bible may be made to teach anything or nothing. (b) The serpent would appear to Eve to speak, which must have caused her surprise, and yet the sacred narrative represents the Nachash as familiar to Eve. She expresses no surprise at its power of

speech or of reasoning, but enters freely into conversation with it. Besides all this, it seems to me very difficult to believe that God would lend his power—his miraculous power—to an evil spirit, to enable him to lead to sin the mother of mankind. Add to this (c) the injustice of subjecting an innocent creature to contempt on account of the sin of another being, as a punishment for that sin, and the necessity of rejecting this explanation will be evident.

Preston.

EVAN LEWIS, B.A., F.R.G.S.

(To be continued.)

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. LXX.)

THE GENEROUS AND AVARICIOUS.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."—Prov. xi. 24, 25.

This proverb is paradoxical in expression, but unquestionably true in principle. The philosophy of the human mind, and the experience of ages, attest its truth. There is a distribution that enricheth the soul of the distributor, and there is an appropriation that impoverishes. The words bring under our notice the respective operations, the reactive influence, and the social estimate of the generous and avaricious in human nature.

I. THE RESPECTIVE OPERATION OF BOTH THOSE PRINCIPLES. First, the one "scattereth." It is like the hand of the sower scattering the seeds of kindness in all directions. Whatever is suited to ameliorate the woes and to bless the lives of men, whether it be ideas, wealth, influence, or effort, it willingly gives. Secondly, the other "withholdeth." The avaricious dis-

position is a withholding power, keeping back that which society claims and wants. What is the hoarding of wealth but the keeping back of that which the poverty and sufferings of humanity require. The withholding of the avaricious in England, explains much of English pauperism and distress.

II. THE REACTIVE INFLUENCE OF BOTH. Every effort has a reaction. Action and reaction is the law of the universe, material and spiritual. First, the scattering "increaseth." The liberal soul "gets fat." Not unfrequently does liberality bring temporal wealth-invariably, spiritual wealth of soul. Every generous act enricheth our spiritual being. "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, running over, and shaken together. (Luke vi. 38.)

Secondly, the withholding "tendeth to poverty." Avarice always leads to moral pauperism. The man who receives all and gives nothing, sinks lower and lower into the depths of spiritual destitution. The soul of the miser is

a miserable grub. Strongly does Paul show the truth of this—"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully," &c., &c. (2 Cor. ix. 6—11.)

III. THE SOCIAL BSTIMATE OF "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it." First. the people shall curse the avaricious. Who knows the imprecations that fall every day on the head cf the avaricious and miserly man? "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy," &c. (Amos viii. 4, 6.) Secondly, the prople shall bless the generous. Hear Job's experience, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." (Job xxix.

"The truly generous is the truly wise; And he who loves not others lives unblest."

(No. LXXI.)

"He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him."— Prov. xi. 27.

THE words lead us to look at good and evil in two aspects.

J. As objects of pursur.
First: Some pursue good. "He
that diligently seeketh good."
There are those that are industrious in the search and service of
goodness. They diligently seek
good for themselves and good for
society.

Secondly: Some pursue evil. "He that seeketh mischief." There are some as industrious in doing evil, as others in doing good; they are always in mischief.

II. As SOURCES OF DESTINY.

These pursuits bring different results to the soul.

First: The one procureth farour. Favour with their own conscience : favour with society; favour with God. Secondly: The other disfavour. "It shall come unto He shall have what he him." The disapprobation of deserves. his own conscience—the denunciation of society—the frown of God. "Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood. He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."-Psa. vii. 14-16.

(No. LXXII.)

TRUSTING IN RICHES.

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall."—Prov. xi. 28.

I. Here is a common tendency. Nothing is more common than for wealthy men to trust in their wealth; to trust for happiness and honour to worldly possessions. Like the fool in the Gospel they say "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." (Luke xii. 19—21.) Wealth as an object of trust is, first: Spiritually unsatisfactory. Secondly: Necessarily evanescent. Man's wealth cannot stay long with him. The connection is very brief.

II. HERE IS A TERRIBLE CATASTROPHE. "SHALL FALL." "Fall!" First: Whence? From all his hopes. Secondly: Whither? To disappointment and despair. Thirdly: When? Whenever moral conviction seizes the soul, whether before or after death. Fourthly: Why? Because wealth was nover a fit foundation for the soul. "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness."—Psa. lii. 7.

(No. LXXIII.)

FAMILY LIFE.

"He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart." —Prov. xi. 29.

THE words imply three things:

I. That PEACE SHOULD BE THE GRAND AIM OF ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE. It is here implied that to trouble the house is an evil. And so it is. Each member should studiously endeavour to maintain an unbroken peace in the family sphere. Every look, expression, thought, word, calculated to disturb should be carefully eschewed. Whatever storms rage without, there should be serenity within the household door.

It is implied—

II. THAT THERE ARE SOME MEMBERS WHO BREAK THE PEACE OF THEIR DOMESTIC CIRCLE. There are some who "trouble" their own house. The ill-natured, impulsive, false, selfish. These are domestic troubles. He who breeds founds in families creates wars in man's earthly heaven.

It is implied—

III. THAT THOSE WHO BREAK THE PEACE OF THEIR DOMESTIC "He that CIRCLE ARE FOOLS. troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart. Two things show their folly. First: They get no good by it.
"They reap wind." What if
they gratify for a moment their vanity, their selfishness, their pride by it? Their gratification is but wind. Secondly: They get degradation by it. "The fool shall be servant to the wise of heart." The habitual disturber of the family circle soon by his folly sinks into a base servitude. The loving and the peaceful, by the wisdom of their conduct, rule him by a dignified despotism, which fills him with mortification.

(No. LXXIV.)

THE LIFE OF THE GOOD.

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner."—Prov. xi. 80, 31.

THESE verses suggest three things in relation to the life of the good

on earth.

I. THE INVOLUNTARY INFLUENCE OF A GOOD MAN'S LIFE. The fruit of a life is the involuntary and regular expression of what the man is in heart and soul. All actions are not the fruit of life, inasmuch as man in the exercise of his freedom, and indeed even by accident, performs actions that, instead of fully expressing, misrepresent his life. Hence savs Christ, "By their fruit," not by their action, "ye shall know them." The regular flow of a man's general activity is the fruit, and this, in the case of a good man, is a "tree of life." It is so for three reasons. (1) It expresses real life. (2) It communicates real life. (3) It nourishes real life.

II. THE HIGHEST PURPOSE OF A GOOD MAN'S LIFE. "He that winneth souls is wise." This implies (1) That souls are lost. (2) That souls may be saved. (3) That souls may be saved by man. (4) That the man who succeeds in saving souls is wise.*

III. THE INEVITABLE RETRIBUTION OF A GOOD MAN'S LIFE. "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth." The recompense here is supposed to refer rather to the suffering he experiences, in consequences of his remaining imperfections, than of the blessings he enjoys as a reward for the good that is in him. The sins of good men are punished on this earth. The

^{*} See Homilist, series iii., vol. v., p. 289.

sufferings endured by the good here, Solomon uses as an argument for the certainty of the greater sufferings that must be endured by the wicked. "Much more the wicked and the sinner." The argument is a fortiori—if God visits the sins of his people here with punishment, much more will He visit the sins of the wicked. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

(No. LXXV.)

GOOD AND EVIL.

"Whose loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish. A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn. A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved."—Prov. xii. 1—3.

Good and evil are presented in three aspects.

I. In RELATION TO INTELLI-GENCE. First, the good loves intelligence. "Whose leveth instruction, loveth knowledge." A truly good man is a truth-seeker. The constant cry of his soul is for more light. Secondly, the evil hates intelligence. "He that hateth reproof is brutish." Reproof is a form of intelligence. It shows to a sinner in the light of great principles, either the imprudence or immorality or both of his conduct. He hates this, and is thus "brutish." He who does not desire to have his faults exposed to him in the light of law and love is brutish. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. (Jer. xxxi. 18.)

Good and evil are here presented,

II. IN RELATION TO DIVINE JUDGMENT. First, the good secures the favour of God. "A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord." Heaven smiles upon the rightcous. "Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield." (Psa. v. 12.) To obtain the favour of God is the highest object of life. "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." (2 Cor. v. 9.) Secondly, the evil incurs his condemnation. "A man of wicked devices will be condemn." The frown of eternal justice shadows the path of the wicked. "He that believeth not is condemned already."

Good and evil are here pre-

sented,

III. In relation to their STANDING. First, the evil have no stability. "A man shall not be established by wickedness." How insecure are the wicked! They are in slippery places. (Psa. lxxiii. 18.) They live in a house whose foundation is sand. condly, the good are firmly established. "The root of the righteous shall not be moved." "God is their refuge and strength," &c. Like the monarch of the forest, whose roots strike wide and deep into the heart of the earth, it stands secure amidst storms that wreck the fleets of nations and level cities in the dust.

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

THE GREAT PROPITIATION.

Article XII.—(Continued.)

Replicant.—In answer to Querist No. 16, p. 352, Vol. XVII., and continued from p. 356, Vol. XIX:—

On some popular Theories of the Atonement of Christ, proposed to Explain its mode of Operation.

This theory of the Christian atonement does effectively for mankind what the Hegelian philosophy tried in vain to do in another way. It delivers all men from the influence of the idea of a personal God. Guillaume Marr said that "the true road to liberty. equality, and happiness was atheism," or the freeing of the human mind from the restraint imposed upon it by a belief in personal responsibility to God; but the debt theory of the work of Christ gets rid of all sense of responsibility, while it retains in its creed the existence of God as an article of belief. Every man, for whom Christ died, owes the Deity neither reverence nor obedience, nor is he liable to any punishment for sin, as the Atoner by his atonement has paid the whole of his debt - discharged his obligations, and endured his punishment.

4. According to this theory, there is no such thing as the forgiveness of sin, or salvation by grace. If a debt be paid, no matter how, or by whom, if it be paid, it is not forgiven. Payment and forgiveness are contradictions.

If our Lord has endured our punishment—has suffered the just consequences of our sins, then sin is not forgiven. It has had its own course, and produced its own evil. If at any future time the sinner were punished, then would the same crime be twice punished, which would be unjust. If Christ has met for us the demands of justice, by obeying the law and suffering the consequences of transgression, then is salvation-freedom from evil and the reward of obedience, no more of grace but of justice. Christ was kind and gracious in doing what He did for us, but God gives nothing for which He is not paid; therefore is our salvation an act of grace on the part of Christ, but an act of mere justice on the part of God.

5. This theory seems to me to be a libel on the Divine character. It represents God as exacting, not giving; as demanding, not perstowing; as punishing, not pardoning; as being just, but not gracious. He shows no favour, but requires and gets his due. Christ suffers and gives, but God demands and has the uttermost

farthing.

If, then, God has all He requires—no matter who pays Him, whether the original debtor or his surety, if he be paid—no thanks are due to Him for what He gives or does. If man is saved, no thanks to God, for He was fully paid for it by another. All thanks are, therefore, due to this

other. St. Paul's triumphant shout of victory must be altered from, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," to "No thanks to God, for He gives us no victory—gives us nothing; but thanks to Christ, who purchased our victory for us!"

Such is the nature of this theory of the atonement—a theory which was, alas! identified with the Gospel by the Puritans, and is still thought to be a fair representation of the truth. But it falls to the ground at every point. It requires at the beginning, what the Word of God will not allow, the separation of God and Christ, each being regarded as a distinct conscious being or The Bible everywhere shows it to be the duty of all men, Christians and unconverted people, to obey God, and emphatically declares that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" but this theory is destructive of all moral obligation. Great prominence is given in the Scriptures to the doctrine of the forgiveness of sin. We pray for forgiveness, according to the examples of pious men, "Pardon my iniquity, for it is great," and according to the instruction of the Saviour himself, "Forgive us our trespasses;" and the Divine Being is repeatedly said to forgive men their sins. But the debt theory of the work of Christ shows that all the Bible's teaching about forgiveness is but mere empty talk, as God forgives no man a sin, but is fully paid for each by our surety! The talk about forgiveness is a mere show of benevolence and

nothing but a show; for in reality nothing is given without payment to the full!

The Bible everywhere speaks of our salvation as being of God's grace. God saves by or through Christ, but never on account of Christ. God is the efficient cause of our salvation, and Christ is the instrumental cause or medium mediator—of His grace. absolute Deity reaches us in a special form assumed, and by a special revelation given-which is Christ; so that we owe all we have, or may possess, or be, to God, who made his love known to us in the Christ-form—in Christ. According to the Gospel, God gives us all we have-yes, gives and forgives all our sins-forgives; but according to the debt theory, God gives nothing, and forgives nothing, as everything which comes through His hand is purchased at a full price.

The conclusion of the matter seems to me to be this: we can accept either the accuracy of the Bible, as the Word of God, or the puritanic notion of the Atonement, as the payment of debt by a surety; but to accept both as true is impossible. They are diametrically opposed to each other, as opposed as light and darkness are. One must be rejected as untrue, for the one is destructive of the other.

I, for one, would rather sacrifice a theory than sacrifice the Word of God; for the former is the invention of man, the latter is the production of God.

GALILEO, B.A.

(To be continued.)

Literary Aotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON

In every work regard the author's end, Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE WORKS OF HENRY SMITH; with Life of the Author. By THOMAS FULLER, B.D. Vol. I. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet and Co.

Bur little is known of this old divine. "What is true of the river Nilus," says Thomas Fuller, his quaint biographer, "that its fountain is hid and obscure, but its fall or influx into the midland sea eminently known, is applicable to many learned men, the places of whose birth generally are either wholly concealed, or at the best uncertain, whilst the place of their death is made remarkable. For as few did take notice of their coming out of their attiring-house, so their well acting on the stage commanded all eyes to observe their returning thereunto."

It appears, however, that our author was born at Withcok, Leicestershire, and that he was of gentle extraction and born to affluence. He was educated in the University of Oxford, and there filled himself with that learning which in due time he poured out to others. Having finished his education, he accepted a lectureship at St. Clement Danes, without Temple Bar. Although his judgment was far from going with all pertaining to the Anglican Church, he loved peace, and united in affection with those from whom in opinion he dissented. In his day he was called the silver-tongued preacher, and chimed with the melody of speech similar to that of St. Chrysostom. His church was always crowded, and he played upon his congregation as a master musician upon his harp. He died of consumption about the year 1600. He was a voluminous author. Many of his discourses were printed surreptiiously from shorthand notes. These, however, in self defence and for the sake of his literary reputation, he afterwards published himself. It is stated that his public sermons became a family book in his own day. Judging from the discourses in this volume, he appears to have been remarkably free from the affectations that greatly disfigured the pulpit productions of his own time. He was too earnest to play the punster or the polemic. If he had not the logic of Goodwin or the pathos of Brookes, he had a spiritual insight into truth as piercing as either, and a power of presenting what he saw with remarkable vividness and effect. We class this volume amongst the best sermonic productions of the preachers of olden times.

A COMMENTARY ON THE WHOLE EPISTLE TO THE HEBBEWS. By WILLIAM GOUGE, D.D. Vol. II. Edinburgh: James Nichol-London: James Nisbet and Co. Dublin: G. Herbert.

In the last volume of the Homilist, page 238, our readers will find a brief sketch of the author of this volume and our judgment upon his productions. This volume completes his work on the Hebrews, which was his masterpiece, and which is considered to contain the substance of his public ministry, which was one of great brilliancy and influence. Critically, of course, these volumes are below the mark. Since the author's days, nay, within the last twenty years, biblical criticism and Jewish archæology have made wondrous advances. But in the power of seizing and lucidly exhibiting in condense suggestiveness the great ideas of a text the work is equal to most of the best of modern times. It is strictly a homiletic exposition. On every page there are seeds of sermons.

St. Paul: His Life and Ministry to the End of his Third Missionary Journey. By T. Binney. London: James Nisbet and Co., 21, Berners Street.

This volume contains a course of lectures, which the distinguished author delivered to the young men of his congregation. In matter they are not exhaustive, but suggestive; in style they are not rhetoric, but conversational; and in effect upon the reader, they are interesting, refreshing, and stimulating in the highest degree. Though the author goes not as minutely into the circumstances of Paul's adventurous life, nor as critically into the phraseologies, either of himself, his biographer, of his friends, or of his foes, as Conybeare and Howson, he, nevertheless, sketches the incidents with a remarkable accuracy, hits out the meaning of utterances with a stroke, seizes the leading idea, disrobes it of its old costume, detaches it from its old relations, and holds it forth a powerfully living lesson to modern men. Indeed no book has ever brought Paul so near to English intelligence and consciousness.

SIRPLE TRUTH: Spoken to Working Men. By NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D. Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate-hill, London.

This is a small volume of sermons, the subjects are "The Wonder of Indifference not Saved," "Publicans and Sinners hearing Christ," "The Love of Christ for Sinners," "The Story of the Prodigal Son," "The Gadarene Demoniac," "The Home Mission Work of Christians," "Prayer," "Principles of Christian Toleration," "The End of the Year." We need scarcely characterize the author's treatment of

these subjects. His well-known catholicity of soul, force of intellect, and literary aptitudes are too well-known for this.

Animal Sagacity. Edited by Mrs. S. C. Hall. London: S. W. Partridge, 9, Paternoster-row.

This book is valuable in many respects. The well-authenticated anecdotes which it contains concerning the sagacity, kindness, and fidelity of the lower animals—the exquisite pictorial illustrations, in which the various creatures appear to live and move before you—the paper, type, binding, and the general getting up, and withal the grand purpose and tendency of the whole, namely, to impress the young mind with the duty of kindness to animals, constitute this volume one of the best Christmas presents for the young.

THE CHILDREN'S PRIZE. Edited by J. ERSKINE CLARKS, M.A., London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster-row.

WE are glad to find from this volume, that our old friend, the Rev. Erskine Clarke, continues his incomparable literary ministry to the young. This volume, which abounds with interesting and useful anecdotes, and with stirring pictorial illustrations, is equal, if not superior to any of its predecessors, which we have not failed from time to time to commend with all heartiness to the friends of the young for general distribution.

A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY, DESIGNED AS AN ILLUSTRATIVE COMMENTARY ON THE SACRED SCRIPTURES. By SAMUEL GREEN. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row.

A WORK that has sold to the amount of sixteen thousand copies, must have a fame and a merit, rendering it to some extent independent of any word of introduction or commendation to society. This is a pocket theological dictionary, and an admirable assistant to Sunday-school teachers.

THE BIBLE REMEMBRANCER. By Rev. INGRAM COBBIN, M.A. Illustrated with Maps and Engravings. London: William Tegg.

This little work is intended to assist the memory in treasuring up the Word of God. It includes, amongst numerous useful articles, a Scripture numeration, an alphabetical index to the Psalms, improved readings, a key to the Promises, an analysis to the whole Bible, and is illustrated with maps and engravings. It is an admirable little book.

Short Notices.

THE SUNDAY SCHOLAR'S ANNUAL. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row. This annual contains stories and ballads written by able authors, and is illustrated with twelve full-paged wood engravings by eminent artists. It cannot fail to interest children. THE STORY OF LITTLE ALFRED. By D. F. E. London: S. W. Partridge, 9, Paternoster Row. This is another beautiful and wholesome tale for children. --- Congregational Church Music. Weighhouse Chapel Series. Nos. III, V., VII., XII. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster Row. Here are the four parts, treble, alto, tenor and bass, of the well-known Weigh-house series of Congregational Church Music. - LIFE: WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT? An Address to Young Men. By Rev. WILLIAM GUEST, F.G.S. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster Row. This is a vigorous and thoroughly healthy address to young men. --- Who IS YOUR PRIEST? A Word for the Times. London: S. W. Partridge, 9, Paternoster Row. This is multum in parco. It says all that can be well said on the question of priest, and that in a few very small



AHOMILY

A Ritualistic Church a Foolish Church.

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?"-Gal. iii. 1.

E hear very much—perhaps too much—in the present day of the various parties into which the Church is divided. Setting aside all other denominations, we have, within the pale of the Church of England only, High Church, Low Church, Slow Church, and Broad Church—each standing as far apart as Conformity and Dissent in their most antagonistic phases. For the first of these we have to propose a new name—a name sanctioned by apostolic precedent, and more truly descriptive than any of those usually applied to it—the bewitched, the enchanted, or, perhaps, best of all, The "Foolish" Church.

True, we are scarcely warranted in calling it a "Church" at all, as the Apostle described its creed as a perversion of the Gospel: "another Gospel which is not another," and denounced it as heretical, though ministered by any—even by "an angel from heaven." He is, in fact, describing just what a Church ought not to be; and yet, strange to say, the Negation is accepted as a Model. This foolish Church is essentially and pre-eminently "after men;" it was received from men, claiming an hereditary sanctity and power, observing days and months and times and years, turning back

to the beggarly elements of a typical dispensation, and contending, not for the faith once delivered to the saints, but for ceremonial observances already declared by God Himself to have been done away with.

And this very plain declaration of St. Paul denudes this miserable "Church" of all its sacred character, and lays it open to discussion by the common people—the profanevulgar, as they have been proverbially called. And more than this, its "foolish" character strips it of those arrogant pretensions it has so often made to an amount of mystic lore far too profound for the range of ordinary minds. The fence of awful sacredness and mystery is not only broken down, but common sense—the average mind of the masses—is by implication admitted to the lists. It will not do to say that we are laying unhallowed hands upon the Ark: for the Ark is not there! This "Church" of Ritualism, of ceremonies. of dead forms and dogmas, of witchery, of apostolical succession, and of deference in things spiritual to human authority -to men who seemed to be somewhat, but of whom Paul says, with a manly nonchalance, "Whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me,"-this Church, being no church at all, we may deal with as we please, without putting off a shoe, or cowering before the "power of the keys."

Nay, but, say some, this Ritualism is no unmeaning thing: it has a deep and earnest heart in it; it symbolises the great mysteries of Redemption. We deny it altogether. It might have done so three thousand years ago, but all it can now point to is a barren future—

"Darkness there, and nothing more."

O foolish Ritualists! who hath bewitched you, that you should look for the earnest only, when you might banquet on the full fruition? Unwittingly, perhaps, but literally and palpably, you have turned your backs on the Redeemer, whose eyes of loving rebuke are looking on you, not from the Future, but the Past. From this Past, also, a voice addresses you, as angels and archangels, and all the glorious company of the redeemed, do homage to the full-orbed

Royalty of Jesus—"This Man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool; for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

This plea of a suggestive character—an earnest meaning -must, therefore, not avail the Ritualist. A prophecy after the fact—a promise of good things gone by, is at best a "foolish" thing. Can we suppose that Paul saw no meaning in the beautiful ceremonials he is here denouncing, so long as they were confined to their proper time and place in the grand economy of Redemption? How lovingly he dwells upon them in his wonderful letter to the Hebrews; and how, till the greater glory of the Gospel dawned upon the world, he clung to their golden memories, so firmly as to wish himself accursed for the sake of his dear kindred. whose prerogative they had been so long! But now, they were nothing but weak and beggarly elements, shutting off his view of Jesus, and not only forming no part of his Gospel, but diametrically antagonistic to it.

Let us now see why Paul calls the Ritualists the foolish Church.

I. It is poolish in its origin. Its very foundation was laid in a Great Mistake. It is based on an Apostolic Protest. I stand in doubt of you; I am afraid of you; I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. These are certainly not very promising indications of a sound and healthy church.

A "church"—so called—of whom Paul stood in doubt; of whose practices he declared himself afraid, and for the very conversion of whose teachers he still agonized in spirit, would certainly have been no model church, even had its foundations been well and wisely laid. But look at these! The entire fabric rests upon, and springs out of, a moral hallucination—a psychological hocus-pocus. It is galvanized into life by the wand of a mountebank! The word, too,

which our translators have r ndered "bewitched" has a secondary meaning, equivalent to "slandered" or "traduced," as though Paul would say, O foolish Galatians! who can have invented such innuendos; who can have alleged such childish things against you? Yet these silly practices have been exalted into precedents for that "pernicious nonsense" against which the common voice of humanity is beginning to cry out.

II. FOOLISH IN ITS IDEA OF THE SUSTAINING ENERGY OF THE CHURCH. Its inspiration is bewitchment; the most capricious and deceptive of all powers-if such it can be called-"a mockery, a delusion, and a snare." More than three thousand years ago, Balaam made the discovery that neither enchantment nor divination was of any avail in matters that lay between man and his Maker. Bewitchment has always been a resort of the adversary—an element in the propagation of error-not a means of upholding the The Abracadabra of Ritualism can never secure the continuous and unfailing oversight and renewing of the Holy Ghost, without which the Church could not exist a single hour; so true is it that the members of Christ's body, like the multiform creations of the material world, are vivified only by the direct inspiration of God Himself. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to the dust."

III. FOOLISH IN ITS RETROGRESSION. "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" "Ye did run well; who did hinder you?" More forceful is the marginal reading—"Ye did run well; who did drive you back?" The sheep would have been safely folded, but for the silly antics of these false shepherds, who, standing in the way, with their turnings and crossings and genuflexions, their unknown tongues and flaunting vestments, scared them into bypaths, or drove them headlong to their own destruction.

Progress is the order of the Church; by Christ's own erdinance it is to go on unto perfection. The "Foolish

Church" is a solecism—always advancing backwards! Is Christ a schoolmaster to bring us to Moses? Is that first which is spiritual, and afterwards that which is natural?

IV. FOOLISH IN ITS ESTIMATE OF THE TRUE POSITION AND REQUIREMENTS OF HUMANITY. The Church of England has solemnly professed its belief that man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and therefore in every person born unto this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation (Art. IX.). That the condition of man is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his natural strength and good works to calling upon God (Art. X.). That he is accounted righteous before Him only for the merit of Christ Jesus, and must be justified by faith in Him alone (Art. XI.).

And how does Ritualism propose to heal this great hurt, and supply this vital want? The practical blasphemy of its creed may excuse strong language. It comes to him with a travestie of the redemptive process, and turns the great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh—into an acted charade! O foolish Ritualists! who should have berne the highest earthly name—"Ambassadors for Christ!"—how can you have so turned back, so to become mummers and mountebanks—the dressed-up puppets of a mediæval "Mystery," the strolling players in our long-dead-and-buried "Moralities?"

But this so-called Church is pre-eminently

V. FOOLISH IN HAVING LEFT ITS FIRST LOVE.

This is the saddest item—the crowning wickedness in its whole catalogue of folly—the lower deep, beyond the lowest. "After that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" Christ had been evidently set forth before the eyes of the Galatians crucified among them. Flesh of their flesh—partaker of their nature, the echoes of his earnest voice had scarcely died out, and the

memory of his walk on earth was still so warm and fresh in their hearts; and yet they could turn from Him—from all his wonderful teachings, to another gospel, which was not another, guided by no better impulse than the bewitchments of time-serving and seducing teachers.

This phase of the sad story tells with direct power on those recreants in the Church of England who have in a similar manner turned from the truth, and been turned unto fables. If education could give grace, that Church might occupy a high place, indeed, among the Beræan nobility of Christendom. Their alma mater has been tenderly alive to the necessity of a sound and scriptural creed for her sons; and, so far as wise and well-meant laws could do it, has walled them in by ramparts reared upon a stable basis. "Holy Scripture," says her sixth Article, "containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be received as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

Looking round upon the pitiful shams who now minister n so many of our churches, will it be believed that every one of them has given his full assent and consent to this Article of the Church? What! The puppet who struts amongst his flowers and incense, clad in cope and chasuble, and albe and almuce, bearing on his left arm the mystic maniple, wearing at his back some sweet thing in sacramental millinery, bowing and whining before his candlesticks, exalting everything that is unnecessary to salvation, and ignoring all that is essential, requiring to be believed as an article of faith all the fripperies of his "foolish" creed, and ignorantly silent on all that relates to the common salvation?

Yes. He who has made so pitiful a shipwreck of faith, once believed, or thought he believed, or with a lie in his right hand signed his declaration of belief, in the sufficiency of Scripture. The very thought is painful, and the more painful because too true. There are not wanting those who sympathize with the author of "The History of My Religious.

Experience," and follow with interest the downward steps of John Henry Newman, and others of his school, groping, as they think honestly, though vainly, after Truth, and, in all earnestness and sincerity, crying, like children, for the But the story of the Galatian Church throws much light upon the mystery of such a fruitless "feeling after God" by those who have been once enlightened, but, in the restlessness of an unchastened spirit, have sought to be wise above that which was written. Paul agonizes for the reconversion of those gropers in the dark, who could wilfully leave their first love; and, had he lived in our own day, would have told us, with tears, how hard a thing it was for these lapsed priests of the Anglican community to recover their firm footing on the Rock of Ages. For the promise is net to those who, having found the right way, desire some other, but to those who, with all the love and trust of little children, commit the keeping of their souls at once and altogether to God, as unto a Faithful Creator.

DOUGLAS ALLPORT.

A Momiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the Acrs of the Apostles, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its wides truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

Subject: Paul's final visit to Jerusalem.

"And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gen-

tiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law; and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them."-Acts xxi. 17-26.

ERE we have an account of Paul's fifth and final visit to Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea, and the mother Church of Christendom. His previous four visits have occupied our attention, and are elsewhere recorded (Chapters ix. 26; xi. 30; xv. 4; xviii. 21, 22). The verses now under consideration reveal to us the treatment he met with in the holy city by the evangelical Christians, the ritualistic Jews, and the Roman authority.

I. His treatment by the evangelical Christians. (1.) They welcomed him. "And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly." The word "we" includes Paul, Luke the historian, and those seven mentioned in the fourth verse of the preceding chapter. The "brethren" includes those Christian believers whom they met immediately on their arrival; these, we are told, received Paul and his companions "gladly." They rejoiced in their advent, as fellow-believers in the Messiahship of Christ, and as the representatives of Gentile Christianity, and as the bearers of charitable contributions from distant churches to relieve those

of their brethren who were suffering from want in the Church at Jerusalem. We may be sure the apostle and his companions were welcomed heartily, both on the first night of their arrival in the city, and on the next day, in more formal and more general way, but not the less cordial and warm. listened in assembly to his apostolic reports. "And the day following Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry." James, the brother of the Lord, was at this time the head of the mother Church at Jerusalem. elders" were those official members of the Church who assisted in the conduct of its affairs, and the promotion of its spiritual To the house of James, Paul and his companions interest. now resort, and an official session of the Church is held to receive them. The most leading men of the Christian community are there. After Paul had "saluted" (greeted) in words of kindness and respect, he commences his address, and the subject of his address was God's work by him among the Gentiles. "He declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry." The word, "particularly" indicates the minuteness with which he entered into details; he declared each one of the things "which God did in the nations. No doubt he captivated their attention, and filled them with transports of delight. (3.) They glorified God on his account. "And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord." At the intelligence of his triumph, they praised not Paul, but the Lord. Paul represented the work as so manifestly not his own achievements, but the Lord's, that to Him they at once ascribed the praise. (4.) They inform Paul of a disastrous prejudice. seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law." "Thou seest, brother"—though probably James had uttered these words, they are the expression of the assembly, for he spoke in their name. "Brother"—an expression both of personal affection and official recognition, the highest title given in the primi-

tive Church, even to apostles. The fact brought under the attention of the apostle is that there were thousands, literally myriads, meaning an indefinite multitude of Jews, who believed in Christianity, but were still zealots concerning the law of Moses. Whitby quotes various authors to show how intense was the zeal of the Jews generally for their law, and that they would rather die than forfeit their character as its faithful observers. (5.) They reported a current slander against himself. "And they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." This was a baseless calumny—for had not Paul circumcised Timothy, observed a religious vow, and come now to Jerusalem in order to attend one of the great national feasts? It is true that the apostle had denied the necessity of Mosaic observances for personal salvation, but he had never represented them as worthless or unlawful while the Temple was still standing: indeed, in consideration of Jewish attachments to Jewish forms, he had carried expediency to the farthest point in order to conciliate their prejudices. (6.) They propounded to him a method of con-"What is it therefore? The multitude must ciliation. needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee. We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law." "The assembled elders," says an accomplished scholar and able Biblical expositor, "knew what St. Paul was and was not, and, aware, too, of this general misconception of his teaching, recommended to him the following expedient:-Let him show, by a practical proof, that he did not object to a Jew being a Jew still. There were four men, Jewish Christians, at that moment in Jerusalem, bound by a Nazarite's vow. That yow, made commonly at a time of personal danger by

land or sea, by disease or accident, bound the person undertaking it to abstain from wine, and to let his hair grow uncut for a certain period, at the end of which particular sacrifices were to be offered, which were not always within the command of a poor man's purse. It was by no means unusual for richer men to bear the expense of those sacrifices in behalf of the poor. The Christian elders recommend St. Paul to do this: to include himself for a few days in the Nazarite's vow of these four Jewish Christians, and then to pay the cost of the prescribed offerings for all. at charges with them," the 24th verse says, "that they may shave their heads,"—that is, bear the charge, pay the expense, of those sacrifices which must be offered before they can rid themselves of their vow, and cut the hair off their heads in sign of its termination. The advice was friendly, and St. Paul followed it. He who had said in one of his letters, "To the Jew I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews," acted now upon the principle. He had never made it a principle of doctrine that Jews should abandon their ceremonial law. He was a Jew: therefore he might perform one of those ceremonies with a safe conscience, if by so doing he might conciliate his countrymen, and thus, by God's grace, save some."*

Concerning the expedient thus recommended, two things are worthy of notice. (1.) Paul adopted it. "Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them." Whether Paul, with his deep insight into the spirituality of the Gospel, and his love of spiritual liberty, was thoroughly satisfied with this advice or not, he followed it, and thus with the "weak became weak." His conciliation compromised no principle, and was for the good of others, not for the interest of himself. (2.) The expedient was unsuccessful. It was well projected, well carried out, but, like

^{*} See "Church of the First Days," vol. iii. p. 194, by Dr. C. J. Vaughan.

most other expedients, answered not fully the end intended. Seven days had not ended before "the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him."

From the whole of this we learn the following things:-

First-The early conquest of the Gospel. During the quarter of a century which had elapsed since Paul's first introduction to the mother Church at Jerusalem, what wonders Christianity had wrought! The historic sketch which Paul presented now before James and the elders, the marvels which he had accomplished by his ministry, seemed to fill his hearers with devout amazement: "When they heard it they glorified the Lord." And there, too, on that occasion, they tell him that "many thousands of Jews believed." The sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost, and the ministry of Paul and the other Apostles in various parts of Judea, brought thousands of Jews to believe the Messiahship of Christ. These triumphs of the Gospel at the very outset of its career serve several important purposes. They serve to demonstrate the genuineness of Gospel facis. Those who believed at this period and in Judea had ample opportunities of testing the truth of the facts which were presented to their attention. (2.) They serve to show the amazing force of Christian truth. What other systems of truth could have effected such revolutions, could have won such numbers of Jews, who were so strongly prejudiced against its founder and hero to believe in Him, to the salvation of their souls? (3.) They serve to show the zeal with which the Apostles prosecuted their ministry. It was through the preaching of the truth that those conquests were won.

From this we learn-

Second—The tenacity of early prejudice. Those Jews who believed in Christ could not give up the ritualism of Moses, in which they had been brought up. "They were still zealous of the law." Though those whose ministry won them to Christ taught them that the old ritualism was typical and temporary, that Christ was the end of the law, and that

faith in Him was all that was necessary for salvation, they held with tenacity to the old rites. Early prejudices, especially in religion, often attain a potent and pernicious hold upon the human mind; they warp the judgment, they exclude the entrance of new light, they impede the progress of the soul in intelligence, liberty, and growth, in manly independency and power. Prejudices give a colour to the glass, through which the soul looks at truth, and thus prevent her from appearing in her own native hue.

From this we learn-

Thirdly: The slandering tendency of religious bigotry. We learn that those Jewish Christians, who were thus attracted to the ritual of Moses, had been informed that Paul had taught "all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." This was a foul slander, for Paul not only acted indulgently towards the scrupulous (Acts xvi. 3; Rom. i. 4; 1 Cor. viii. 7; x. 27), but in general he disapproved of native Jews relinquishing its observance, and he himself observed too. (1 Cor. vii. 18; ix. 20.) All he rigorously insisted upon was that no prerogative, or claim to salvation, should be built on the observance of the law. And that it should not be imposed as a burden upon Gentile believers. Who fabricated this slander? The bigoted Jews. Religious bigotry has always been libellous; it has an instinct for calumny. Now, as ever, it misrepresents and maligns the men who propound doctrines, transcending its narrow notions. Against such its pulpits, its platforms, and its press are organs of the vilest slander.

From this we learn-

Fourthly: The pacific genius of Christianity. How anxious James, the president of that official meeting, and the elders were, to preserve peace on that occasion! They perceive that a schismatic spirit is rife, and they are anxious to destroy it and promote concord. Hence their question, "What is it therefore?" Meaning, What is to be done?

How shall this false impression be removed? And they proposed the expedient that Paul should join the four men amongst them that were Nazarites. All this shows their strong desire for brotherly harmony and concord. Peace is the instinct and mission of love. He who does not strive to harmonise social discords, crush social feuds, and heal social divisions, has not the true love within him. Love is ever on the wing bearing the olive branch over the social tumults of the world.

From this we learn-

Fifthly: The conciliatory spirit of Christianity. developed in the conduct of Paul on this occasion. He joins the Nazarites and observes their rites. "Paul is among the Nazarites," says Lange, "(1.) Not as a slave of human ordinances, but in the light of evangelical liberty which had power over all things that promote the kingdom of God. Cor. vi. 12.) (2.) Not as a dissembler before the people, but in the ministry of brotherly love, which bears the infirmities of the weak. (Rom. xv. 1.) (3.) Not as a fugitive from the cross, but in the power of Apostolic obedience, which knows to deny itself from love to the Lord. (Luke ix. 23.)" Bold and invincible as was the Apostle, his spirit of conciliation was very remarkable. In 1 Cor. ix. 1, he sketches his own conciliatory line of conduct. "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." In his letters to the Romans he expresses the same spirit in language equally, if not more strong. "If meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth." Fidelity to principle is not inconsistent with a studious endeavour to avoid giving offence to our fellow men.

Jomiletical Studies of the Old Testament.

(No. II.)

SUBJECT: The Divine Sabbath.—Genesis ii. 1—3.

THE Divine Artificer with intelligence and delight completes his work. In the calm majesty of his repose He contemplates it. What a scene must have spread before his eye! The created minds who could comprehend but a part, would be overwhelmed at the splendour, variety, and order. How perfect must it have shone forth before the Divine eye that saw all, comprehended all arrangements, and knew the relations of the universe! As none but He could paint such a picture, so He must have been alone in his delight. This was God's sabbath. We see in it—

I. THE DIVINE COMPLETION OF HIS CREATIVE WORK. heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them." The Bible teaches us that creation ended with the sixth day's work. As it was itself a series of separate distinct acts, so in itself the series was complete. According to this cosmogony there were no further creations. Individuals may be born and die. According to the laws impressed upon the vegetable and the animal worlds there may be the development of the individual from the parent, but it will be after the parent's kind. Races and species may die, become extinct; but, if so, they go to a grave whence there is no resurrection. Whatever may be the truth underlying the words of the ancient record, it certainly is not development of species, either by natural or any other selection. Science and the teachings of God's book are not opposed, but the peculiar form of the present day's theory is not that of the sacred Scriptures.

This fact is in harmony with-

First: The disclosures of science in its history of the earth's crust. The evidence, as yet, is beyond comparison in favour

of no resurrection of an extinct species, nor post-Adamic creation of a new species.

Secondly: The history of the world as the record of moral and religious special acts on the part of God. Human history is not that of a physical world. Events since creation have ethical and spiritual significance. It is true that God has worked on matter, but it has been by natural law which was given it in the creation. If He has used the physical world other than by these ancient laws, such action, to which we give the term of miracle, has always been with a special view of man's moral nature. The theatre for the great drama of human life was completed in creation. Since that, God's action has been the working out of the successive scenes.

Thirdly: The brief references in the other sacred writings to the physical activity of the Creator. He is not represented as creating, but as destroying, and purifying by fire—this, moreover, to take place, in its completest form, at the close of the present dispensation of his moral government. (See Psa. 1. 3; Daniel vii. 9—11; Psa. cii. 25, 26; 2 Peter iii. 7, 10; Hebrews iv. 3; Malachi iv. 1; &c.)

We do not adduce these passages as positive proof. They are only corroborative of the general principle which we assert, that divine interference in the physical world (when not of the nature of miraculous attestation of authority claimed, or statement made by any of God's servants) apart from or not through natural laws set in operation at the Creation, is in the form of destruction and judgment, not creation. Even if these passages be said to be metaphorical, or highly poetic, at least it may be asserted, that none others either declaring or implying the contrary can be quoted. The idea of creative acts other than those contained in the Mosaic account is foreign to the spirit of the sacred Scriptures.

II. THE DIVINE CONTEMPLATION OF HIS CREATIVE WORK. At the close of his work all things pass before the eye

of God. He had looked at them as He called them forth, and more than once had He pronounced them good. But now, "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." Every thing was now complete. Perfect itself, and perfect in its adjustments. Day and night, times and seasons, were in harmony with the changes in vegetable and animal life. All was in subordination. "Heaven and earth were finished, and all the host of them." The Bible speaks of God as the "God of Hosts"the chief of all the armies of sky and earth, with their leaders, captains, generals,-rank and file, and officers; the universe a whole, ordered and governed. Besides this, everything was ready for the higher and the more glorious exercise of the Divine activity in Providence and Grace. All was absolutely prepared for the kingdom of probation, by which the last created of the world was to be tried, disciplined, and perfected.

We may learn here-

First: Evil has no natural place in the universe. God saw all things "very good." Evil cannot then be eternal.

Secondly: Matter is not necessarily hostile to God. The Bible, in this picture of Divine contemplation, cuts away the ground from certain forms of false religion and philosophy. Divine life is not the destruction of matter, nor the rising out of the region of the sensuous; but so restoring the harmony, that God may again look upon the world, and say it is "very good."

Thirdly: The present condition of things, so changed from that which God first looked upon, must be the result of some catastrophe.

III. THE DIVINE REST AFTER HIS CREATIVE WORK. The rest began when the work was done. The contemplation was a part of the Sabbatic blessedness. There are three things plainly taught in this Divine Sabbath.

First: It was a season of rest. It does not imply that there was weariness, but only a cessation from creative

activity. Secondly: The rest was blessed by God. As He saw his work to be good, so He saw his rest to be good. Thirdly: There was an appointment of a similar blessed rest for his creatures. "He sanctified the seventh day."

It is not for us to discuss the relations of God to labour and repose. The fact may be beyond our comprehension. Indeed, it does not seem possible from the record clearly to ascertain what is meant by the "rest of God." But it has lessons for us, clear and manifest. It is these that we wish most to remark.

First: There is a place and time for rest. A sabbath God is represented as finding blessed, and therefore setting a rest apart. This is that man might learn that he may, and ought to rest—body, mind, and spirit need a repose.

Secondly: The condition on which rest may be claimed is that men work. God rested when He had finished his creation. The hardest workers have the greatest right to their sabbath. It would, perhaps, be well if they were a little more jealous of this human right, given and sanctioned by the Divine example and benediction.

Thirdly: This rest should be a happy rest. Much of the modern idea of a sabbath is not that which God would say was blessed. The sabbath is not a season of gloom, repression, and wretchedness.

Fourthly: The rest under such sanction ought to be religious. We are not careful to urge the command of God; the simple narrative of God's sabbath is enough to make our rest such as will bring us nearer to Him. This seems to us to be stronger against a sabbath of frivolity and mere sensuous pleasure, than all the sanction of the Jewish law.*

Fifthly: The rest for man which God's sabbath implies is unlimited to any particular portion of the race. This is the history of the God of all men—not that of Jehovah of the Jews, nor even the Lord of the Christians.

* We now consider only the sabbath. A very different question is that of the Christian Lord's day.

A few scattered lessons may be added.

1. It is a good thing to contemplate the works of God.
2. If God saw all things to be very good, we may surely wait for further knowledge when we do not see the wisdom or the goodness.
3. God rested from his work, not from his government thereof and interest therein.
4. The day of rest will be a day of contemplation.
5. The day of rest must then be a day of praise.
6. God has his sabbath, man has his heaven.
7. He who had such care, such approbation of his creation, will never allow it finally to be detiled by what is contrary to his will:

LLEWELYN D. BEVAN, LL.B.

Germs of Thought.

Subject: Difficulty in Duty.

"And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness. And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to day; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."—Exod, xiv, 10—15.

Analysis of Pomily the Schen Hundred and Forty-Fourth.

HYSICAL facts are the symbols of spiritual truths. The material is everywhere the mirror of the mental. The scene is not only the effect and the organ, but the

symbol of the unseen. The temporal facts of human history also illustrate spiritual ideas. This was especially the case in the exodus of the Jews. That event resembled the exodus of the soul in several respects. (1.) It was deliverance from bondage. Great as was the slavery of the Israelites in Egypt, it is only a dim shadow of the slavery of a depraved soul. The slavery of the soul is the slavery of the man, and is the slavery that death cannot destroy. (2.) It was deliverance from bondage by Divine interposition. It was God that broke the iron rod of the oppressor, and delivered the chosen people. God alone can emancipate souls. (3.) It was deliverance from bondage in connection with the agency of man. Moses was employed to go down to Egypt to overwhelm the despot, and lead all Israel forth. God converts man by man. We have the treasure in earthen vessels. (4.) It was deliverance from bondage that involved new difficulties. From the moment the chosen people started from Egypt, until they entered the promised land, they had to contend with difficulties. It is so with emancipated souls. So long as they remain on earth they have difficulties to contend with. Our subject is difficulty in duty-difficulty in duty deeply felt-difficulty in duty testing character-difficulty in duty divinely overcome.

I. DIFFICULTY IN DUTY DEEPLY FELT. The children of Israel, in marching toward the Red Sea, were in the path of duty, but see the difficulty they met with—the sea rolling before them, mountains towering high on both sides, Pharaoh and his host in the rear burning with ire and determined on their destruction. "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord," &c.

It is ever thus. Difficulty with us ever lies in the path of duty. Duty conducted Daniel to the lions' den, the Hebrew youths to the burning furnace, Paul to prison,

martyrs to the stake, Christ to the cross. The experience of the good in all ages supplies examples. In heaven the path of duty has no difficulty. It is strewn with immortal flowers, and shone on by a cloudless sky. Three facts may explain the reason why duty in this life should be so invariably connected with difficulty.

First: Our temporary well-being here greatly depends upon the conduct of our contemporaries toward us. Providence has so woven the tie of inutual dependance between us and our contemporaries, that our feelings and conditions are greatly influenced by each other. We cannot get on without the help of our contemporaries.

Secondly: The majority of our contemporaries are governed by corrupt principle. Few, perhaps, will doubt this—fewer still deny it. The maxims, spirit, habits of society are, alas! in the main, wrong. "All flesh has corrupted it." Why, "there is none that doeth good."

Thirdly: The man therefore who carries out in his daily life the principles of duty must more or less excite the anger and create the antagonism of his contemporaries. The man who is loyal to the everlasting principles of duty will be speaking things in the ear of society, and be working things before the eyes of society, that will bring on him persecution in some form or other. Christ knew this, and He told his disciples that "in the world they should have tribulation." When society gets holier, the path of duty will get easier. Meanwhile, there is difficulty in every step. "Through much tribulation," &c.

Here we have-

II. DIFFICULTY IN DUTY TESTING CHARACTER.

First: Look at the influence of this difficulty upon the Israelites. "They were sore afraid; and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord." How this difficulty showed the state of their hearts.

Observe (1) their cowardice. "They were sore afraid." The great difference between a true and false man is this, the

one loves duty supremely, the other loves self; the one will sacrifice life for duty, the other duty for life. The reason of their cowardice was want of faith in God who had promised to deliver them: had they believed his word they would not have been afraid. The disciples in the storm of old were afraid because they did not believe. "How is it that we have no faith?" Observe (2) their ingratitude. "And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" Is this spiteful taunting and bitter reproof a suitable return to Moses for the wonders he had achieved for them under God? Observe (3) their apostacy. "It would be better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." They show a disposition here to give up all that had been gained for them, to throw away all that had been done for them, and to go back into their miserable state of vassalage. Thus the difficulty brought out into sunlight the miserable disposition of these people.

Secondly: Look at the influences of difficulty upon Moses. "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to day." In the presence of the difficulty he rises into the majesty of the hero. Amidst the tauntings of the men for whom he had hazarded his life, the rattlings of the chariots and the furious shouts of Pharaoh and his hosts, with the frowning mountain on either side and the rolling ocean before him, he stands before them with sublime firmness, and says, "Fear ye not," &c. He might have taunted them; he might have said, why are ye such mean cowards, why do ye not believe in Jehovah, why taunt me who have risked my all for you? But not a word. Thus difficulty always tests and exposes character—the false and the true come out to the light.

Here we have-

III. DIFFICULTY IN DUTY DIVINELY OVERCOME. "The Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall

hold your peace." It was so. They were delivered, as we find from the subsequent verses. At the command of Moses the tribes move onward, his brave words inspired them with a temporary courage. They approach the margin of the sea. It is a critical moment. The suspense is intense. mystic pillar, which had hitherto gone before them, recedes, and goes between Israel and the Egyptian hosts. The dark side mantles their enemies in midnight. The bright side throws its radiance over Moses and his charge, and gleams on the billows through which they have to pass. Moses now stretches out his hand, and the waters divide, and a dry path is formed. The Israelites advance, the waters divide, and on each side consolidate as walls. The Egyptians, with a fatal recklessness, still pursue them. On they go, until the whole are between the mighty waters. For a short time all seems favourable; the waters retain their wall-like position. But now the chariot wheels begin to move heavily; slower and slower they move. At length they stand still. Terror strikes into their hearts: they would retrace their steps, but cannot. "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians." This is their cry, but it is too Their doom is sealed. Israel's heroic leader stretches forth his hand, and the piled mountains of water fall back into their channel, and Pharaoh and his host are engulfed. One loud shriek of mortal agony rises from the drowning millions, and all is over. The morning dawns, the chosen people are safe on the other side, the waters roll as usual, and the waves, as they break upon the shore, bear one Egyptian corpse after another, clutching in their stiffened hands the implements by which they sought to destroy the men of God. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea," &c. (Exod. xv. 1—19.)

Thus it is ever ultimately with all difficulty in duty it is overcome. (1.) The nature of moral progress shows this. The conquest of one difficulty increases the capacity of the soul to conquer another. And thus on. (2.) The promises of God's word insure this. Satan is to be put under our feet. We are to overcome as Christ overcame. We are to become *more* than conquerors.

Subject: The good, in relation to their Spirit, their God, and the Universe.

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28.

Analysis of Homily the Seben Hundred and Forty-Fifth.

TITHOUT offering any preliminary remarks upon this chapter, which is a triumphant hymn, every part of which is gloriously suggestive, I shall at once exhibit the class of persons referred to in the text. Who are they? They are called by different names in the New Testament—"disciples," "saints," "children of God," &c., &c. They are the truly good. These words present the truly good.

I. In relation to the spirit of their life. love God." Love to God is the differentia of their spiritual being. But what is this love? It is not a passing sentiment. In the hearts of most men, perhaps, there comes up at times an emotional love towards the great Father. Love to God. however, only becomes virtuous when it rises into a permanent predominance. There are three kinds, or rather three forms of virtuous love towards God. (1.) Love of gratitude. This is awakened by the contemplation of his wonderful favours. (2.) Love of esteem. This is awakened by a view of his moral excellences. (3.) Love of benevolence. This is awakened by a belief in the universal goodness of his purposes. In relation to man these forms of love may exist separately. We may feel gratitude for kindness where we cannot feel esteem for excellence. We may have esteem for excellence where we may have no gratitude, simply

because no favours have been shown. And we may have both where we have no benevolence, simply because the grand purpose of the object's life may not seem good. But in relation to God, love takes these three forms. His favours are infinite, and therefore gratitude is supreme. His character is absolutely perfect, and therefore moral esteem is supreme. His grand purpose is good, and good only; and there is the wishing well to all his plans and aims. Love, religious love, thanks Him for what He has done, adores Him for what He is, wishes Him well for what He is pursuing. Its prayer is, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

There is no good man, whatever his creed, Church, profession, sentiment, who has not this love as a dominant power at the fount of all activities.

These words present the truly good,

II. IN RELATION TO THE CONDUCT OF GOD. First. IIe has "called' them to love. How does He call men to love Him? Not by force. Love cannot come by commands and penalties. He calls men to love by exhibiting the loveable in Himself, by exhibiting his mercies to awaken gratitude, his perfection to awaken esteem, his benevolence to awaken a hearty goodwill. This He does. (1.) In the phenomena of nature, how loveable God appears in the forms and operations of the universe. In all nature God calls men to love Him. This He does. (2.) In the dispensations of life. In all the events of our mortal life, from the cradle to the grave, He appears before us as an object to command our affections. This He does. (3.) In the biography of Christ, here we have his kindness, his perfections, and his benevolent designs. Thus He calls us to love Him. who shows us the most loveable gives to us the strongest call to love. God shows the loveable to man in a degree infinitely higher than any creature in the universe can do.

Secondly: He has "called" them to love according to his purpose. "Who are the called according to his purpose!"

Whatever He does through all ages; He purposed doing from the beginning. He does not act fitfully, or by caprice, but by predetermination. From the beginning He purposed calling his intelligent creatures to love Him. All the arrangements of nature, the machinery of his government, and all the revelations of Himself, show this. The Gospel is his especial call to man as a sinner to love Him. And how exquisitely adapted it is to generate in depraved souls the affection.

These words present the truly good-

III. IN RELATION TO THE WORKINGS OF PROVIDENCE. things work together for good." (1.) All things are working. The animate and inanimate, the material and spiritual, the great and small, the proximate and the remote, all things are There is nothing stationary. God moves, and in operation. the universe moves. (2.) All things are working harmoniously. "They work together." The universe is a system of co-operative forces. A manufacturing machine in operation looked at in certain parts, appears all counter-action, wheels running in reverse directions; but viewed from the point where the result of the whole is developed, an harmonious co-working of every part is demonstrated by the exquisite fabric that is rolling out. What seems counter-working is in reality co-working. The notes that seem discordant blend with sounds which we are too deaf to hear, and chime melodiously with the whole piece. (3.) All things are working harmoniously for good. The co-operation is not for evil, but for good, and good only. If evil come it is not intentional, it is accidental, it is not by the necessity of things, it is by the freedom of souls. (4.) All things are working harmoniously for the good of the good. "Those that love God." This is a point, and Paul says "we know" it. How do we know it?

First: From à priori reasoning. On the assumption that the Creator is benevolent, we are bound to conclude that He would direct all to the happiness of those that love Him. It is ever the instinct of his creatures to seek the happiness of those that love them. We know it—

Secondly: From the arrangements of the universe. Does not the exquisite adaptation of outward nature to minister to our animal senses and physical wants, to our desire for knowledge and love for the beautiful, show that the Creator intended to make his moral creatures happy? We know it—

Thirdly: From the special provisions of the Gospel. Here is pardon, purity, knowledge, consolation, holy fellowship, and a blessed Paradise. We know it—

Fourthly: From the operation of the affections. (1.) Love to God puts the soul into harmony with the universe. The soul destitute of love to God is in antagonism with the whole system of nature. (2.) Love to God enables the soul happily to appropriate the universe. In truth, love is happiness. We know it—Fifthly: From the biography of the good. Joseph, David, Daniel, Paul. We know it—Sixthly: From the assurances of God's Word.

Subject: Religious Decision.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."—Josh. xxiv. 15.
Analysis of Homily the Schen Hundred and Forty-Sirth.

VERY candid thinker will admit that religion of some kind is good; and most men in civilized countries will admit that the religion of Christ is, of all religions, the best; and there are many men, notwithstanding that they have not embraced this religion, who will confess readily that there cannot be salvation apart from it; and some of them will admit still further, that, unless they have a vital and experimental interest in it, they must be damned everlastingly; and yet, strange to think, they treat the religion of Christ with the greatest indifference, and wilfully procrastinate to receive its doctrine as a rule of life, and as a basis for their hope of future happiness.

Why is it that persons, who make such liberal and reasonable concessions as these, hesitate for a single moment to give a most hearty reception to a religion so essentially virtuous, and indispensable to their everlasting well-being? Can it be that they are sincere in their acknowledgments of the real worth of Christianity; or do they actually mean to deceive There are many men in every Christian community, I warrant to assert, whose integrity cannot be questioned, who will frankly endorse all these concessions, and yet they have not given their hearts to Jesus! And why is this? It is not for the want of an intellectual appreciation of the Gospel, but for the want of a right disposition to yield to its influence-it is an error of the heart, not of the judgment, that prevents them from deciding for God. As the conviction under the influence of the Gospel is sharpened, and the carnal propensities under the influence of the world are aroused, the soul oscillates between the world and the kingdom of Christ, the pleasures of sin and the reproach of religion. This instability is detrimental to man's best interest, therefore he should be thoroughly decided in his conduct towards Christ and his kingdom. Hence, we invite attention to the following considerations :---

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS DECISION. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Why is decision in any matter of such importance?

First: Because thus only can the harmonious operation of all the powers of the soul be secured. Man is endowed with very great powers of volition, reason, affection, conscience, and imagination. These powers have been given to him to be usefully employed, and their united and harmonious employment requires the most thorough and inflexible decision; and a decision, in order to partake of this character, must necessarily be in absolute conformity with eternal rectitude. There can be discord between the various operations of the mind; schism in the soul; the law of the flesh warring against the law of the spirit; a conflict between inclinations,

the lower propensities of human nature rebelling against the authority of the highest faculties of the soul; and conscience as the faithful witness of God, does protest solemnly against all such improper actions of the mind and false inclinations of the heart.

This discord in the soul mars its happiness and checks its progress, and weakens its energies; moral decision puts an end to this discord, and secures the most perfect harmony between the divers operations of the powers of the soul. The harmonious operation of all the powers of the soul is strength, tranquillity, and moral happiness; and this can only be secured by religious decision.

Secondly: Because thus only can every difficulty be successfully overcome.

Indecision, doubt, mental conflict, inward schism, and moral cowardice are weakening, embarrassing, and discouraging. The secret of all success is unity of design, earnestness of purpose, and concentration of power. With these qualities of mind, the soul becomes irresistible in its action, defying opposition, mastering difficulties, and surmounting the most formidable obstacles with the greatest alacrity.

There are difficulties connected with all undertakings and enterprises—such as merchandise, politics, education, and mechanism—to master which demands thorough decision. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

But while there are difficulties in the way of all worthy attainments, intellectual, secular, and social, religious difficulties are the most numerous, potent, and formidable, and demand, for that reason, most resolute and persistent effort to overcome them. There is the natural enmity of the carnal mind to all that is spiritual; there are the fascinating allurements of the world, and the self-denial, and the cross, which religion enjoins upon all its subjects; there is the power of habit, the influence of old associations, on the one hand, and the opposition of the world, and the deluding insinuations of the devil, on the other; these are some of

the formidable obstacles which the soul must surmount in deciding for God and in persevering to serve Him, and to surmount these obstacles demands the strongest moral resolution. There can be no moral success, therefore, without the most thorough moral decision.

Thirdly: Because thus only can we obtain the full approbation of God. God's approval is the highest blessing that the soul of man can possibly desire. His approbation is stimulus to the intellect, peace to the conscience, harmony to the affections, and a heaven to the soul. His disapproval, on the other hand, is the most terrible and insufferable curse to the soul; it is hell to the conscience, and dark despair to the mind. With God's approval we can be happy in sickness, in penury, and under persecution. We can exclaim in the midst of them all, "None of these things move me." And with God's disapproval, we must be miserable even in the most gorgeous palaces, and amid the most sumptuous luxuries the earth can afford. True religion is the effort of the soul to please God, according to the teaching of his Word. And to please God we must be decided: there must be a voluntary consecration of all that we are, and have, to the Divine service. The Lord will not accept of a partial consecration. The heart, mind, time, and property—He demands all. We should write upon every faculty of the intellect, affection of the heart, action of life, and upon every object we possess, "Holiness to the Lord." With the least degree of indecision this would be impossible. We must be decided, if we would obtain the approbation of God.

II. THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS DECISION. How is this religious decision proved? It depends on the action of the will. "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." To serve the Lord demands the action of the will. Firstly. The will is the controlling faculty of the soul. Every intentional act is produced by the action of the will. We will not pause to consider the nature of its volitional operations now, nor to

state the numerous metaphysical, mystical, and conflicting theories of men, in regard to the operation of the will; but simply content ourselves with stating the fact, that the will does exercise a controlling influence over the actions of the mind and body, and also determines the character of all such actions. If the will is inactive, then all the powers of the mind and body are dormant and stationary. If the will is active, every energy, intellectual, physical, and moral, is employed, unless arbitrarily obstructed. Hence, God appeals to the will-" Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Religious service is with man a matter of choice. power to will and to do comes from God; the use of that power belongs to man. He will neither will nor work for us, but He gives us the power to do both. The sin consists not in leaving undone that which we had not the power to do. but in omitting to do that which we had the ability to do. It is not for the want of power, but for the abuse of power, that we are condemned.

Secondly: The will that it might be virtuous in its action or volition must be free. Compulsion deprives an act of its moral character. An act, in order to be virtuous, must be free. It is the voluntariness of an act that makes it moral. Man has the power to will; this cannot be questioned; this power has been given to him by God. This determines in a great measure the extent and character of his daily activities and transactions. Man, if he is left to act of his own accord. acts according to the promptings of his will. Man has the power to choose between honesty and dishonesty, truth and error, virtue and vice, whenever they can be with certainty distinguished. All men do these things daily. The will does not only determine the amount of activity, but it determines its character. If we commit an injury upon our fellowman willingly, our conduct is criminal, and deserves punishment; but if the injury was done unintentionally, or against our will, we are innocent, and deserving of sympathy. Upon man's freedom of choice rests his responsibility, and the character of his conduct. This liberty of choice is recognized in this text, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

Thirdly: That the action of the will is determined to a great extent by the influences which are brought to bear upon it. Man cannot act intelligently without a motive. There must always be some motive, good or bad. Why we act thus, and not otherwise. In religion God has brought the weightiest motives conceivable to bear upon our wills, to induce us to decide for God. Yet they are not such as to constrain us irresistibly to yield, for that would destroy the freedom of our will, and, consequently, deprive us of the virtue of obedience; nevertheless they are such, if candidly considered, as will enable us to decide for God. He has brought before our minds the essential distinction between sin and holiness, everlasting life and everlasting death, the work of the Spirit and the preaching of the Word, the events of Providence, the examples of the good, heaven and hell, the cross and the judgment, and all the sublime doctrines of the Gospel. Thus man is left without a cloak for his sins, without a shadow of apology for his disobedience. If the soul is lost, it is because it would not choose to serve God. What terrible responsibility rests upon man refusing to serve God, when his conscience and reason prove it to be right; when the Gospel shows how it should be done; when the Holy Spirit prompts him to it and tenders his gracious aid.

III. THE URGENCY OF RELIGIOUS DECISION. Choose you this day, whom ye will serve. We should be prompt in our decision.

First: Because procrastination is dangerous. We know not what a day may bring forth, and sin is very begniling. You know not that another opportunity will be given you, and even if there should be, that you will be more disposed to accept it than you are now. Hence, "Choose you this day."

Secondly: Your advantages will never be greater than they are now. You have the Gospel preached to you, the Spirit

to strive with you, God's people to pray for you, his providences to warn you, and Christ to intercede for you.

Thirdly: It is criminal to hesitate to do that which is so manifestly your reasonable duty. If you will not decide while it is a day of grace, you must for ever perish.

L. DAVIES, M.A.

Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. I.)

SUBJECT: Wounders in the House of One's Friends.

HAUCER, in one of his wonderful, graphic passages, alludes to

"The smiler with the knife under the cloke."

This seems to be exactly the attitude of many of the false friends of biblical truth. They smile on it, and stab it, or, if they do not quite go so far, they superciliously ignore the paramount demands of Revelation, or give its glory to another. We claim for it, and justly, all that Cowper claimed for it when he wrote—

"A glory gilds the sacred page; Majestic, like the sun: It gives a light to every age; It gives, but borrows none."

Yet how many, instead of contending zealously for the superlative antiquity and originality of the Bible, are content for it to take a second place, forgetting often how much is involved in this concession. The man is eminently disloyal to the truth who does not ask for every literary fragment, or, in fact, for any document bearing on the subject, the same credentials, external, internal, direct, or circumstantial, as can be adduced in favour of the word of God itself. Yet this is never done. China, India, Assyria, Persia, Egypt, are allowed to have their superlatively ancient books; but not so, or only grudgingly, the poor Hebrew. He whom God made to school the world is degraded into a learner and

a copyist. We might bring forward many proofs of this, but content ourselves this month with an example, the more startling, because it comes to us under sanction of a great and good name—that of Dr. Macleod, who, by inserting it in his *Good Words* for May last, appears to endorse its very grave heterodoxy.

"The Oldest Story in the World" is the title of this choice brochure, which is nothing if not old; and if old, silly, drivelling, and indecent, as such bibliographical treasures not uncommonly are. But we will let the narrative

speak for itself.

Anepu and Batau were brothers. The elder "had a house and a wife;" the younger was engaged with him in husbandry. Anepu was peculiarly happy in his cattle; they were so remarkably intelligent-"they always told him where the good herbage was." The younger brother being sent home one day for seed, is treated by the wife of Anepu much as Joseph was treated by the wife of Potiphar, with the same result. On the husband's return home, poor Batau is traduced by the wicked wife, and his brother naturally makes up his mind to kill him without judge or jury. But before this younger brother puts up his cattle, on his return home, one of the heifers tells tales, and a second "follows on the same side." Batau takes the hint, peeps under the door, and, seeing his brother's legs there, sagaciously concludes that the owner of them is lying in wait for him. He accordingly giveschase across the country, followed by his brother. But before the latter can come up with the fugitive, the sun-god, Harmachis, spoils the game by interposing a great stream full of crocodiles. On the morrow Batau clears himself of the scandal, and pacifies his brother, telling him that he and hissoul are about to part company, for he is going to place his better part in the topmost blossom of a certain cedar, of which he tells him, with all the sublime magniloquence of an oracle, "as soon as ever the cedar tree shall be cut down, then will it fall to the earth!" Anepu, who must be in very easy circumstances, to spare the time, is to spend seven years in looking for it, and, on finding it, is to plunge it into cold water, and restore his lost brother to life. Anepu returns home in ill-humour, kills his wife, and casts her to the dogs.

In his solitude, Batau meets with the nine gods, who, like sensible fellows, think he should have a wife, which consummation is soon brought about. But, according to the seven

Hathors, she is too beautiful to be trusted alone, and her fond husband consequently cautions her against going abroad. lest she should meet the Sea! She yields only a qualified submission, but directs her ramble towards the Cedar Mountains, thinking, no doubt, in her simplicity, that the Sea is not likely to find her there. But Love laughs at impossibilities, and, sure enough, Old Ocean is strolling on the hilltop. He sees her, but she escapes him, though he succeeds in getting a lock of her hair, which fills all Egypt with fragrance, and at length reaches the hands of Pharaoh. immediately sends out scouts in all directions to find the owner, and she is ultimately brought before him, and becomes his wife. On assuming this new position, she betrays the soul of poor Batau, her husband: the cedar-blossom is cut off, and "he falls away and dies." No matter: his brother tries the cold-water cure, and restores him, but not very cleverly, for, contrary to all precedent, his heart is the last thing to move. The meeting of the brothers is a joyful one, but shortlived. Batau, at his own request, is turned into a sacred bullock, and his brother rides home upon his He makes himself known to his beautiful wife, who most unnaturally wants to eat his liver, and an attempt is consequently made to kill him; but he has as many dodges as Paupukcewis, and escapes by a miracle. Ultimately she bears the king a son, whom he makes Prince of Ethiopia and viceroy of the whole country, and then, like a good king, "flies to heaven." Then "the other," presumed to be Batau, narrates the whole history and mystery of his life, takes his brother into favour, puts him into his place, and assumes the throne, reigning thirty years as King of Egypt.

We have nothing to say against those dotards who love antiquity for its own sake alone. Let them read and print any nonsense they please, merely because they believe it to have been written, when literature was rare, if not precious. Let them even admire, if they can, "the simplicity, the freshness, the almost biblical style" of this extremely silly narrative. But never let them attempt to do it at the expense of revelation. We are not prepared to give up the claims of the Bible to that superlative antiquity which we believe to be its right, and look upon that man as a traitor who, when he talks of the oldest story in the world, ignores the magnificent poem of Job, or the venerable books of

Moses.

Before touching therefore upon graver matters, let us look for a moment at the claims of this "tale of three thousand years ago" to the honourable distinction assigned to it. It purports to have been written for a son of Pharaoh Ramses Miamun, and was regarded as "good enough to be associated with the name of Pharaoh's scribe Kagabu"—"an Egyptian Burke, or Gibbon," according to Mr. Perowne, who stands sponsor for the story!

We have not seen the original manuscript, though we hear it is in the British Museum; but presume it is mainly written in the enchorial or common character of the country, interspersed probably with a few hieroglyphics, phonetic, symbolic, figurative, or demonstrative. We are willing, therefore, to believe that the translation fairly represents the original; and is not so wildly guessed at as in the majority of cases of

this kind.

Of the material, we can speak much more confidently. It is written on papyrus, an article unknown in Egypt or anywhere else, until the fourth century B.C. Herodotus describes the use made of this byblos or papyrus plant; but gives no hint that it was employed in the manufacture of paper, and his annotator, Beloe, says that this art was unknown before the founding of Alexandria. Pliny describes the process with all the circumstantiality of a new invention; and it was not until after his time that it reached its climax as a manufacture, or a staple product of the country. We must therefore altogether disallow the assumed antiquity of this

papyrus.

Then as to the time of Ramses Miamun, we have a large margin left us. Those who know anything of Egypt, know that this name is "plentiful as blackberries" upon almost all its monuments from the age of the Greek and Roman rule in that country, backwards through several centuries. Ramses Miamun, Ramses Miamun, Ramses Miamun, mo very characteristic distinction in the land of Ammon, no very characteristic distinction in the land of Ammon—is inscribed again and again, usque ad nauseam, on the Tablet of Abydus—ten times consecutively amongst the latest names—and in so many other places, that it would be more puzzling to say where it is not to be found than where it is. Not that this frequent occurrence of the name proves anything, as there is precisely the same evidence of the real existence of Osiris, Horus, Anubis, or any other of the "brutish gods of Nile."

The only fact, therefore, to be learned from it is, that the old priests of Egypt were at variance with Mr. Perowne in supposing him to have lived "two and thirty centuries ago," their pretensions never rising nearly so high, or fixing with any approach to accuracy, the age of this literary Augustus—this great patron of the slipshod novelists of ancient Egypt.

We are inclined to suspect Dr. Macleod of a hoax in this matter; we hope it may be so, but the wut is so infinitesimally small, or perhaps only so essentially Scotch, that we cannot see it at present. Is it possible that any baby of a larger growth, say five feet ten in his stockings, can really see anything to admire in this silly story? If it be otherwise, we could have been content to leave Mr. Perowne "alone in his glory," had he not made it the occasion of attack on the originality and majesty of the inspired writings. resemblance," says he, "between some portions of the narrative in Genesis and the style of the Egyptian writer, may be accounted for by the fact that Moses was trained by men like Annanna and Kagabu in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." We have heard of men growing wiser than their teachers But in making this insidious side-thrust, our author gives us no hint of the kind. Nay, he repeats the blow. "Writings, such as these, may have contributed to his education ! They help us, at least, to realize more vividly the fact that the great lawgiver was prepared for his mission, not first in the solitudes of Horeb, but in the court of Pharaok and in the schools of Egypt!"

Farewell, then, to the old fallacy that it was the great I AM, who raised up this signal deliverer and schooled him for the work. According to Mr. Perowne and Dr. Macleod, He did but finish the work of education, by developing into action the lessons learned by Moses in the

lowest of the low dame-schools of precocious Egypt.

MATERIALS OF SERMONS.

Reasons are the pillars of the fabric of a sermon, but similitudes are the windows which give the best light. The faithful minister avoids such stories whose mention may suggest bad thoughts to the auditors, and will not use a light comparison to make thereof a grave application, for fear lest his poison go further than his antidote.—FULLER.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

UNPARALLELED LOVE.

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. v. 7, 8. THE grand doctrine of the Bible is this:—that God loves apostate man. Nowhere else do we learn this. Nature teaches that God loves His creatures, but the volume of nature was written before the Fall, and it says nothing as to his affection towards man as a sinner. This is the exclusive mission, and this the glory of the Bible. In almost every conceivable form of expression the Bible endeavours to impress us with the fact that God loves man though a sinner. In illustrating this passage, we shall state the leading facts which it suggests.

I. THAT MAN HAS, CONSTITUTIONALLY, A KIND AFFECTION FOR HIS SPECIES. The Apostle is speaking here of men generally, and he says that in some cases the generous instincts of human nature would prompt to the utmost self-sacrifice. That man has in him this inherent element of social kindness, I maintain in face of all the facts of oppression, cruelty, blood-

shed, that make up a large portion of the history of the Notwithstanding the Pharaohs, Herods, Neros, Napoleons, Lauds, Bonners, of the world, there is a spring of kindness in human nature. First: The tendency of sin is to destroy this element. sin not entered into the world. this element of kindness would have united all the races of mankind in the bonds a loving brotherhood. Secondly: The tendency of Christianity is to develop this element. Christianity recognises it, appeals to it, strengthens it. Blessed be God, bad as the world is. there is a fountain of love in its heart.

II. THAT SOME CHARACTERS HAVE A GREATER POWER TO EXCITE THIS AFFECTION THAN "Scarcely for OTHERS. righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." First, the righteous man is not likely to excite it. "Scarcely." Who is a righteous man? He is one who conforms rigorously to the outward forms of morality; he pays all that is demanded of him, and he will be paid to the utmost fraction of his due. He is what the cold

mercantile world calls a respectable man. He has no generous impulses, no heart, and, therefore, has not in him that which can awaken love in others. The just man is very popular character. Secondly, the "good" man has power to excite it. is the good man here? kind man—the man of warm sympathies and loving soulthe man who can weep with those who weep. Such a man evokes the sympathies of others. He has often done The case of Job opening by his kindness the heart of his age, and of Pythias enduring the punishment for Damon, and of Jonathan and David, are cases in point.

III. THAT THE SACRIFICE. OF LIFE IS THE HIGHEST EX-PRESSION OF THIS AFFECTION. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die." There is nothing that man values, as a rule, so much as lifefriends, property, health, reputation, all are held cheap in comparison with life. To give life, therefore, is to give that which he feels to be of all the dearest things most dear. A man may express his affection by demonstrative language, by indefatigable toil, by costly gifts, but such expressions are weak compared with the sacrifice of life. "Greater love," saith Christ, "hath no man than this," &c. The sacrifice of lifefor another demonstrates at once, in the most powerful way, both the *intensity* and *sincerity* of the affection.

. IV. That Christ's death IS THE MIGHTIEST DEMONSTRA-TION OF AFFECTION. God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This will appear, if you consider, (1) the characters for whom He died-"sinners." (2) Consider the circumstances under which He died. Not amid the gratitude of those whom He loved, but amid their imprecations. (3) Consider the freedom with which He died. He was not compelled. (4) Consider the preciousness of the life He sacrificed. His life was worth all other lives. herein is love.

Learn from this subject, first, the moral grandeur of Christianity. There is no such manifestation of love in the universe as this. Secondly, the moral power of Christianity. The motive itemploys to break the heart of the world is this wonderful love.

STRANGERS MAY BE ANGELS.

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."— Heb. xiii. 2.

As Abraham sat at the door of his tent in the vale of Mamre, sheltered, perhaps, from the scorching rays of oriental noon by overshadowing trees, three travellers came up to him, whom he entertained with the hospitality common to his age and his country, and common in Arabia even to this hour. These travellers turned out to be angels—benign messengers from the eternal heavens of love. The text is an exhortation founded upon this circumstance. Our subject is that "strangers" may often be "angels."

I. Strange Persons may often turn out to be "angels."

First: It may be so with the "stranger" who enters our household. Whatever his errand, in whatever condition he appears, though he be a pauper with a pauper's petition, if we entertain him we may find, perhaps, something of the angel in him. He may breathe a spirit, utter a sentiment, express a soul indicating a kindredship with the Vulgar heartlessness skies. often hustles from its door a suppliant in whom the angelic lives.

Secondly: It may be so with the "stranger" in our neighbourhood. A stranger comes and takes up his abode in our vicinity. For a time foolish pride, or unnatural shyness, or a meaningless conventionality, may keep us

apart from him. At last the introduction comes. We entertain him, and time proves him to be an angel to us—our guide in a great difficulty—our support in a sad trial, &c. Do not shun neighbours.

Thirdly: It may be so with the "stranger" in our Church. A man joins our communion. There may be much that is strange in him to us. He may be a Catholic, a Churchman, a Baptist, or Wesleyan. Still, entertain him with brotherly love, and perhaps we may discover something of the angel.

Fourthly: It may be so with the "stranger" in our country. A foreigner enters our land-a Russian, Pole, Spaniard, Hindoo, Chinaman. it matters not. Don't despise Treat him kindly, and vou may find even in him something of the angel, something that may contribute to the progress of the state. The moral is — Treat all men with generousness and goodwill, and you may, perhaps, find angelic things within them.

II. Strange THINGS may often turn out to be "ANGELS."

First: A "strange" truth may turn out to be an angel. There are men so narrow and prejudiced in mind that they bolt their souls against all that is new in thought. If a fresh truth knock at the door,

they thrust it from them with indignation. Yet he who receives a new thought may receive an angel—an angel that may solve his difficulties and enfranchise his intellect, and make the horizon of his soul beam brightly with unearthly stars.

Secondly: A strange trial may turn out to be an angel. Adversity may come, and exchange your mansion for a hovel; disease may come, and reduce your strong frame to an emaciated skeleton: bereavement may come, and make your home circle a desolation. Still, do not battle against these messengers. Entertain them with loval submission to the God that is over all, and they may prove blessings in disguise. They may be like Lot's angels, dragging you from Sodom to the mountains of God.

Thirdly: Strange charities may turn out to be an angel. Some fresh philanthropic or religious institution knock at your door and solicit your support. Do not thrust such charities from you. Entertain them. They are angels that can do you more good than you can "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

CHRIST'S RESURBECTION A HIGHER FACT THAN HIS DEATH.

"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."—Rom. viii. 34.

THE text starts the though that Christ's resurrection is better than His death—"Yea rather, that is risen again."

I. HIS RESURRECTION PRE-SUPPOSES THE FACT OF HIS DEATH. His death is not to be disparaged. Its importance cannot be overrated; none can appreciate it too highly. It is the highest expression of love the universe ever witnessed—the highest homage to truth, rectitude, and order. that the Divine government ever received. It was a deathblow to all past dispensations; it rang in the new era of eternal mercy. But great as is his death, the great thing is implied in his resurrection. There could not have been a real resurrection had there not been a real death. And that His resurrection was real, we have often endeavoured to demonstrate.*

II. HIS RESURRECTION DE-MONSTRATES THE WONDERFUL-NESS OF HIS DEATH.

First: His resurrection demonstrates the absolute voluntariness of his death. He who could rise from the dead by his own power, could have avoided death. His rising proved that He had power to

^{*} See "Resurrections."

lay down his life, and take it up again.

Secondly: His resurrection demonstrates the supernatural character of his death. Only a few of the millions that have died, have ever been raised to life; only one ever rose by his own power, and that was Christ. The supernatural resurrection shows the supernatural death. It is the resurrection, therefore, that gives a meaning to Christ's death.

Thirdly: His resurrection secures the moral purpose of his death. The great end of his death was to give spiritual life to humanity, and this his resurrection ensures. He is alive, to carry on by his Gospel and his Spirit the great work of man's spiritual restoration.

Brothers, let us think rather of the risen than of the dead Christ. A dead Church worships a dead Christ—bows before His effigy on the canvas -kisses his feet on the cruci-But a living Church fix. keeps her eye ever on a living Alas, the modern Church generally lives rather on the gloomy Saturday, when Christ is in His grave, than on the bright Sunday when He appeared to His disciples: -the blessed Easter of the world.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. xi. 23-26.

These verses give an count of what is called the "Lord's Supper." This supper was instituted by Christ Himself the night in which He was betrayed while He was observing the Passover with his disciples. On that night He virtually directs minds of men from Jewish ritualism, and centres "Do this them on Himself. of ME." remembrance True religion now has to do with a person, and that person In reading the is Christ. words of the apostle before us, there are four things which strike us with amazement.

I. THAT ANY SHOULD DOUBT THE GENUINENESS OF CHRISTIANITY. Here is an institution that was started the night previous to our Saviour's crucifixion, which

attended to by the was Church at Jerusalem after the day of Pentecost, celebrated by various other apostolic churches, as corded in the Acts of the Apostles, and which Paul here states he ceived from the Lord," and delivers now to the Corinthian Church. From the apostolic age down to this hour, through eighteen long centuries it has been attended to by all the branches of the true church. Since its origin thousands of generations have passed away, many systems have risen and disappeared, nations have been organized, flourished, and broken up, but this ordinance continues: and continues, what for? To commemorate the great central fact of the Gospel namely, that Christ died. Is there any other fact in history sustained by evidence half so powerful as this?

These words suggest another thing which strikes us with amazement.

. II. Тнат ANY SHOULD MISINTERPRET ORDI-THIS NANCE. Here we are distinctly told that it is to " show forth the Lord's death." No language can more clearly show that it is purely commemorative. There are three abuses of this institution, which imply the grossest misinterpretation.

First: The gustatory. The Corinthians, to whom the apostle now writes, thus used They introduced a loveit. feast to immediately precede it, probably because a Jewish feast preceded its first celebration. This led to gluttony and other evils. Hence, in the preceding verses he says, "When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What ? ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." The memof the Corinthian Church were converts from heathenism, and they had been accustomed, in their heathen festivals, to give way to gluttony and intem-Many of them, perance. from the force of old habits. were tempted to use the Lord's supper in this way, hence they were guilty of the "body and blood of the Lord," that is, guilty of profaning the institution designed to commemorate His Thus, they ate and drank "unworthily," and by so doing, ate and drank condemnation to themselves.

Another use which implies the grossest misinterpretation, is—

Secondly: The superstitious. There are some who believe that after the words of consecration pronounced by the priest over these elements, the elements become literally the "body and blood of the Lord." This is transubstantiation. Others, who would not go thus far, still superstitiously regard the ordinance as a mystic medium, through which grace is poured into the soul of the recipients. Fearful abuse this.

Another use which implies the grossest misinterpretation, is—

Thirdly: The formalistic. There are those who partake of the bread and wine merely as a matter of form and ceremony. It is regarded as the proper thing to be done, and is done mechanically. We evangelical Christians are not guilty of the first nor the second, but we may be of the third. Let us "examine ourselves;" so let us eat, &c.

These words suggest another thing which strikes us with amazement.

III. THAT ANY SHOULD SAY THE INSTITUTION IS NOT PERMANENT IN ITS OBLIGATION. The Apostle tells us distinctly that it was to show forth the Lord's death till he come. When will that be?

Not just yet. The human world seems to be only in its infancy, and Christianity only just beginning its work. The billows of a thousand ages may break on our shore before He comes.

On to that distant point the obligation is binding. There are some professing Christians who think themselves too spiritual to observe such an ordinance. These very spiritual ones, to be consistent, should avoid all scientific studies, for science has to do with material forms; its principles are all embodied, are made palpable to the eye and They should also avoid all biblical studies, for biblical truths are, for the most part, embodied in material facts. Christ himself was flesh and blood.

These words suggest another thing which strikes us with amazement.

IV. THAT ANY ACQUAINTED WITH THE BIOGRAPHY OF CHRIST SHOULD NEGLECT IT.

Consider—First: That it is to commemorate the world's greatest Benefactor. It is to keep Christ in the memory of man. Here is a Benefactor (1) that has served the world in the highest way, effected its deliverance from sin and hell. (2.) Served it by the most unparalleled sacrifice—He sacrificed his life to the work. (3.) Served it

with the most disinterested love.

Consider—Secondly: It is enjoined by the world's greatest Benefactor. He Himself has enjoined it; "Do this in remembrance of me," and this command He gave under the most touching circumstances. How amazing it is that men should neglect it!

The excuses that men make for neglecting this are singularly absurd. A man will sometimes say, "I can be saved without it." We ask, who told you so? What is damnation? What but disobedience to Christ? and he who neglects this institution disobeys Him. Another man will say, "I am unfit for it." We say, if you are unfit for this you are unfit for any other religious observance; unfit to read the Bible, sing, or pray, nor can you ever become fit by neglecting your duty.

Scripture and Science.

(No. II.)

SUBJECT: Dew and Hoar Frost.

A.—The facts of Science bearing on these subjects.

Material objects are composed of a number of atoms in a state of combination, as water, which is composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen (H₂O); or common salt, which is formed of one atom of sodium and one of chlorine (NaCl). These atoms have, themselves, not the properties of the compound, but when they combine as atoms, the resulting compound must be very small. The quantity of water denoted by the symbol H2O is probably not the millionth part of a drop; still it has all the properties of water. This minutest part of water is called a molecule. These molecules are of various shapes, and adhere to each other with various degrees of tenacity, as seen in solids, liquids, and gases. In no case are they in actual contact, nor are they ever found having, for a long time together, the same relative position. Like water in the sea, they are always in a state of motion. These motions are of various kinds, but I wish to speak of one, the motion which gives to the touch the sensation of heat. Really, the molecules are simply moving among themselves, and becoming more distant from each other. This motion expands the body whose constituent parts these molecules are, and renders it less in specific gravity. These molecules, though too small to be seen by the strongest microscopic power, move, not in straight lines, but in *spirals*, as if along the threads of a screw; that of water being thirty times as fine as that of lead or mercury. When the molecules of water have reached the distance from each other at which they always stand when the thermometer stands at 212 deg. Fahr., the substance assumes the form of steam or vapour, and, being of less specific gravity than the atmosphere near the surface of the earth, it rises until a stratum is reached whose specific gravity is equal to its own.

The evaporation of water is thus seen to be caused by the separation of its molecules by a force which we name heat. The heat of the sun expands the superficial layer of the sea and lakes, and causes the water to rise and float in the air in the form of vapour. When the temperature is sufficiently high the vapour becomes transparent and invisible. This is explained by supposing its molecules, which are seen only when many are together, to become isolated. A diminution of temperature, by the setting of the sun, lessens their centrifugal tendency, and brings them sufficiently near together to be seen again in the form of vapour. These minute globules of vapour fall upon the grass of the field and the trees of the forest, and, uniting with each other, under the influence of gravitation, they form drops of clear and pure water, and hang like tears upon the closing eyelids of the flower. These drops are known as dew, and appear because the heat of the sun evaporates the water, and the cold of the night lessens the expansive force which separates the aqueous molecules, and thus condenses the vapour, unites the molecules into groups, which are sufficiently large to affect our organs of vision.

In the case of sea, and any other water which holds mineral substances in solution, the molecules of the mineral are held between those of the fluid element, but in the process of evaporation the molecules of water are separated from each other, and thus the mineral particles are set at liberty, and being themselves of greater specific gravity than the air, they are left behind, and the clear water, free from all mineral impurities, alone, rises to the clouds, and then condenses into rain, or rises into imperceptible vapour, and then condenses into dew.

The existence of invisible vapour of water in the atmosphere, and the lowering of the temperature to the condensing point, are the two only conditions of dewfall. The former condition is daily fulfilled by the heat of the sun, and especially in the summer or in tropical regions; the latter by the radiation of heat by objects on the surface of the earth.

Equilibrium of forces is the only condition of stability. A body in motion will ever move, unless its moving force be counterbalanced by another equal and opposite. In nature there is a constant effort to attain a state of repose or equilibrium, but that state is approached by

the law of oscillation. A pendulum in motion seeks to rest in a position in the straight line which joins the centre of the earth with its point of suspension, but, in coming to this place, it comes with too much force, and first of all passes over it to the opposite side.

Objects, whose temperature is different, placed at any distance from each other—though only seen by us when they are near—seek a state of repose. The heat of the hotter flies off in the direction of the colder, to bring it up to a common standard. The colder object is warmed and the hotter is cooled, until at length both have equal temperature; or, to speak more in harmony with modern science, the molecules which move faster and at a greater distance from each other, communicate their motion to those in the other objects, which are more sluggish, until the ultimate particles of both have attained a common velocity. The hotter object in becoming cool goes at first beyond the point of equality, and becomes the colder of the two. The other then begins to heat its neighbour, and both, after many oscillations, arrive at a state of repose, or of equal temperature.

Some substances part with their heat by radiation, much more quickly than others. Grass radiates heat, and thus cools much more quickly than earth or stone, or wood or metal.

When the sun has ceased to heat the grass or ground, or space being colder than the atmosphere, the latter begins to radiate or send forth its heat to the colder region. The air becoming colder than the ground, the latter pours forth its heat to restore the equilibrium of temperature. But owing to the law of oscillation, the ground becomes ultimately colder than the atmospheric stratum nearest to its surface, and owing to the motion of the air a little further from the ground. the strata above become warmer than those below. The stratum in which the grass grows, and in which the trees wave their foliage, becomes too cold to hold the vapour molecules at a distance from each other. Their speed is slackened, and many of them coalesce so as to become too heavy to float in a mere mechanical mixture of gases, such as the atmosphere is. They gently sink and rest upon the grass below, and, uniting in larger groups, they form the glittering drops which dance in the moonlight on the quivering leaf, and sleep in the warm bosom of the flower.

If, however, the air moves much, and moves near the ground, as motion is heat in another form, the requisite cold temperature is not attained, for the condensation of invisible vapour, and no dew falls.

If a screen of wood, or glass, or thinnest gauze be placed above the grass, the heat, radiated by the earth and its covering of vegetation, strikes the screen, and, though some be absorbed, a large portion is reflected back again, and the temperature never becomes low, and the dew is not deposited under these conditions. The clouds are

screens above the ground, which reflect back to the earth again the heat it lost by radiation. No dew is formed, therefore, on a cloudy night. The clearer the sky, other things being equal, the more copious the fall of dew.

Hoarfrost is dew solidified or frozen, and is formed of an indefinite number of crystals, whose beauty must be seen to be conceived.

One more fact must not be forgotten. If a piece of ice be taken, whose temperature is 32 deg. Fahr., and heat applied to it, much heat will be consumed to melt the ice and make it water, and yet, notwithstanding the consumption of all that heat, the temperature of the water is but 32 deg. Again, when water boils, its temperature is 212 deg. Fahr., and an immense amount of heat is used in the conversion of water into steam or vapour, and yet the temperature of steam at the first is only equal to that of boiling water—212 deg. The heat absorbed in either case becomes imperceptible or latent. The law is this—When a solid becomes liquid, it absorbs heat, and when a liquid assumes the form of vapour heat disappears. Evaporation is therefore cooling. The heat of a burning sum is counteracted in its injurious consequences by cold produced by the absorption of heat in the process of evaporation.

The result of condensation is the reverse of this. The heat absorbed on a hot day by the change of water into invisible vapour is given back again, without change or diminution, when that vapour becomes the pearly dew; and the heat absorbed by the ice in becoming water is set at liberty to warm the world on the cold night when the dew becomes hoar frost.

B.—Special points of interest in these facts.

Dew (a) is the purest water in nature, being free from mineral impurities. Rain water, owing to the disturbed action of the atmosphere, when it falls, contains carbonate of ammonia, and during a thunderstorm nitrate of ammonia and other impurities. Dew (b) is the result of a combination of the smallest aqueous molecules; (c) falls plentifully when there is no rain, there being no clouds; (a) falls only when the air is chill; (c) never falls copiously on hard or metallic substances, because these are bad radiators of heat; (f) falls only when the air is still; (g) when the sky is clear, (b) chiefly in the night; (i) falls most plentifully on those objects which are nearest the surface of the earth. Dew in the act of forming (k) gives out heat, and thus warms the night air, and keeps alive the growing vegetation. Dew in freezing, or in becoming hoar frost, gives forth the greatest heat, and that when the night is coldest and the vegetation needs its protecting influence the most: this is hoar frost.

C.—Application of these facts to some of the texts of Scripture.

Conscious of the difficulty of revealing heavenly and spiritual

truths so as to be comprehended by men whose habits of life and associations were earthly and carnal, the sacred writers made use of a large number of figures. Among these, the dew stands pre-eminent as to the variety and beauty of its meanings. The fact of the dew-fall is referred to in Num. xi. 9. Its divine origin is spoken of (1) naturally in Job xxxviii. 28, where the patriarch asks, "Who hath begotten the drops of dew?" and (2) miraculously in Judges vi. 37-40, where Gideon seeks to know the presence of God first by finding dew upon the fleece while none was on the ground. This might have been the case without any supernatural interposition, as the fleece was a betterradiator of heat than the earth, and therefore would of necessity be covered first with moisture. The second test required absolutely some superhuman interposition, for, according to it, the fleece was to be dry while the ground was to be covered with dew. The manner in which the dew is formed is also spoken of-gently, softly, and imperceptibly, its first indication being its actual presence. This is mentioned to illustrate (a) the stealthy approach of an army (2 Sam. xvii. 12); and (b) the kind and gracious words of God (Deut. xxxii. 2). The evaporation of the dew, which happens when the heat of the rising san has become sufficiently great to change the dewdrops into vapour, forming the mist of morning, which disappears when the temperature of the air is raised a little further,-the evaporation of dew is spoken of (a) as a fact in Exod. xvi. 14, "When the dew had gone up;" and (b) as illustrative of transitory goodness, in Hosea vi. 4, "For your goodness as the early dew goeth away." In the majority of cases, however, the sacred writers refer to the refreshing influence of dew. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of dew in Western Asia, as but little rain falls from April to September, the existence of both animals and plants being dependent upon the refreshing influence of dew during the hot months of summer. Hence we find that to have dew, in the case of Jacob (Gen. xxvii. 28), is to have temporal prosperity, and to be far from the dew, as in the case of Esau (Ib. xxvii. 39*), is to suffer temporal privations; and the loss suffered by the country by the death of Saul and Jonathan is spoken of as the cessation of dewfall upon the mountains of Gilboa (2 Sam. i. 21). As

Our authorised version of this verse is very inaccurate, though it follows all the ancient versions and most of the modern ones, "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shall thou live, and shalt serve thy brother," which Nachmanides explains thus: "The fatness of the land and the dews of heaven I can wish for thee also, but the dominion ever thee must abide with thy brother." (See Dr. Raphael, in loco.) It is better, however, to understand the m in mishmanney, fatness, and in mittal, dew, as min in the sense of a negation. It is so understood by Vater, Von Bohlen, Tuch, Knobel, and the best critics. The min has often this negative meaning in the sacred book, as in Job xi. 15, mittum, "without spot;" and io. xxi. 9, "safe from fear," mippachad. In this case the text would thus read: "Behold, away from the fatness of the land shall be thy dwelling, and away from the dew of heaven from above." The home of Esau was the barren hills of Edom, while that of Jacob was the fertile fields of Canaan.

the dew of night restored the elastic texture, the upright form, of plants, and the blushing tints of flowers, whose life had all but been destroyed by the scorching sun, and made them young again, so full vigour of frame, and youthfulness of health, were spoken of as dew—"the dew of youth" (Psa. cx. 3; Isaiah xxvi. 19). The dew also, most graphically, represents the elevating and saving influence of pious men upon ungodly people—"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord" (Micah v. 7).

The realisation of the Divine presence by faith, spoken of by Hosea. [chap. xiv. 5], embraces all the analogies of the dew: for-1. As the dew is the purest water in nature, so is the realised presence of God the truest bliss; 2. As the dew falls most copiously when it is night, and when the night is cold, so is the presence of God most fully realised when life is dark and cold with trouble; 3. As the dew falls only when the sky is clear, so is God's sacred presence felt only when the world is beneath our feet, and when no object intervenes between our soul and the clear heaven; 4. As the dew falls only when the air is still and all is quiet, so do we feel God's presence when, out of bustle, we are alone; 5. As most dew falls upon those objects which are near the surface of the earth, other things being equal, so is God's presence most fully felt by the humble soul; and, 6. As the dew was essential to the growth and beauty of vegetation, so is a realisation of God's presence by faith essential to the life and beauty of the human soul.

The references to hoar frost are insignificant, though appropriate. Exod. xvi. 14; Psa. cxlvii. 16.

Preston.

EVAN LEWIS, B.A., F.R.G.S., F.E.S.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proberbs.

(No. LXXVI.)

THE QUEEN OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband."—Prov. xii. 4.

Few men understood more of woman than Solomon. He knew her frailties and her virtues, and his writings abound with many sage remarks upon the subject. Here he speaks of a virtuous woman, and a virtuous woman is a true woman, chaste, prudent, modest, loving, faithful, patient in suffering, and brave in duty, keeping within the orbit of her sex, and lighting it with all the graces of womanhood. Such a woman, Solomon says, is a crown to her husband. This language implies two things.

I. THAT SHE EXERCISES A CONTROL OVER HIM. A "crown" is the insignia of rule. A virtuous

woman rules, not by intention, or arrangement, or legislative command, but by the power of her love, and the graces of her life. Woman has more force in her looks than man has in his laws, more force in her tears than man has in his arguments. A virtuous woman is really queen of the world. Beauty, tenderness, love, purity, are the imperial forces of life, and these woman wields.

"She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting

sways,
Yet has her humour most when she
obeys."
Ben Jonson.

THAT SHE CONFERS A DIG-NITY UPON HIM. A "crown" is a dignity. She dignifies her husband, as well as rules him. First: Her excellence justifies his choice. In her character and deportment all see the wisdom. the taste, and the judgment of her husband. Secondly: Her management enriches his exchequer. By her industry and economy the produce of his labour is carefully guarded, and often increased. Thirdly: Her influence exalts his character. Her gentle spirit and manners smooth the roughnesses of his character, refine his tastes, elevate his aims, and round the angles of his life.

(No. LXXVII.)

THE RIGHTBOUS AND THE WICKED.

"The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit. The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them. The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand. A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised."—Prov. xii. 5—8.

In these verses Solomon gives us a further description of the righteous and the wicked, and they are here presented in their thoughts, speech, standing and reputation.

Ιn THEIR THOUGHTS. Thoughts are the most wonderful things in connection with human life. They are the factors of character, and the primal forces of history. By thought man builds up his own world. Now the thoughts of the righteous and wicked are here brought out. First: "The thoughts of the righteous are right." The righteous man is a man righteous in heart, and if he is right in heart his thoughts will be right. The heart is the spring of the intellect. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is Secondly: The thoughts of the wicked are false. "The counsels of the wicked are deceit." All the thoughts of a wicked man referring to happiness, greatness, duty, life, God, are false. He lives in an illusory world.

II. In their speech. Speech is the instrument by which thought does its work in society. Words are the incarnations, the vehicles, and the weapons of First: The words of thought. mischievous. the wicked are "They lie in wait for blood." Malice is the inspiration of the wicked, and he uses words as swords to wound the heart and destroy the reputation of others. "The wicked plotteth against the just." Secondly: The words of the righteous are beneficent. "The mouth of the upright shall deliver them." The good desires good, and the words are not to injure but to bless, not to destroy but to deliver. To deliver reputations from calumny, understandings from error, hearts from pollution, souls from hell.

III. In their standing. The wicked are overthrown and are not, but the house of the righteous

shall stand. First: The wicked are insecure. They are to be overthrown. Their hopes, their purposes, their possessions, their pleasures, are all insecure. have seen the wicked in great power, spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not." (Psa. xxxvii. 35, 36.) These men build their houses on the sand, they Secondly: The cannot stand. righteous are safe. "The house of the righteous shall-stand." They are established on the Rock of Ages. " Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out," &c. (Revelation iii. 12.

IV. IN THEIR REPUTATION. " A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised." First: The good First: The good commands the respect of society. The consciences of the worst men are bound to reverence the right. Pharaoh honoured Joseph, Nebuchadnezzar l'aniel. Secondly: The evil awakes the contempt of society. "He that is of a perverse heart shall be despised." Servility and hypocrisy may bow the knee and uncover the head before the wicked man in affluence and power, but deep in the heart there is contempt.

(No. LXXVIII.)

DOMESTIC MODESTY AND DISPLAY.

"He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread."—Prov. xii. 9.

VANITY, or love of display, is one of the most contemptible and pernicious passions that can take possession of the human mind. Its roots are in self-ignorance—its fruits are affectation and falsehood. Vanity is a kind of mental intoxication, in which the

pauper fancies himself a prince, and exhibits himself in aspects disgusting to all observers. The text refers to this in families, and when it takes possession of households it often destroys domestic comforts. The words lead us toremark

I. THAT THERE ARE DOMESTIC COMFORTS WITHOUT DISPLAY. He that is "despised"—that makes himself of no reputation-maintains a humble deportment—may have a "servant." He cares not for appearances, his neighbours may "despise" him, because of his humble bearing, still he has comforts in his family. Instead. of wasting the produce of hislabour upon gilt and garniture. he economically lays it out to promote the comforts of his home. In many an unpretending cottage there is more real domestic enjoyment than can be found in the most imposing mansions.

II. THERE IS DOMESTIC DIS-PLAY WITHOUT COMFORTS. that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread." There are in this age of empty show increasing multitudes of parents who sacrifice the right culture of their children, and the substantial comforts of a home, for appearances. They all but starve their domestics to feed their vanity. They must be grand, though they lack bread. Their half-starved frames must have gorgeous mantles. love of appearance, this desire for show, is, I trow, making sad havoc with the homes of old England.

III. THE CONDITION OF THE FORMER IS PREFERABLE TO THAT OF THE LATTER. It is "better" to have comforts without show, than show without comforts. "Better." First: It is more rational. How absurd to sacrifice the comforts of life to outward show! Who cares for your display? None who care for you;

but only those who would despise you were you stripped of your Better. Secondly: It costume. is more moral. It is immoral to make outward grandeur the grand Immoral, because vanity, the inspiring motive, is a devilish passion. Immoral to study the wardrobe more than yourself. Better-Thirdly: It is more satisfying. It is the nature of vanity that it cannot be satisfied. No amount of jewellery or tailoring can satisfy it.

(No. LXXIX.)

THE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS.

"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."—Prov. xii. 10. THE world of irrational animals is a wonderful world. Its history, which is only begun to be written, is amongst the marvels of The Bible modern literature. commands us to study this world, sends us to the beasts of the field for instruction; it also legislates for our conduct in relation to this world. The text suggests two remarks concerning man's conduct towards the beasts of the field.

I. THAT KINDNESS TOWARDS THE LOWER ANIMALS IS RIGH-TEOUS. "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Three facts will show why we should be kind to them. First: They are the creatures of God. His breath kindled the life of all. His hand fashioned all, both great and small. Dare we abuse what He thought worth creating? Secondly: They are given for our He put all under the dominion of man: some to serve him in one way, and some in another: some to charm his eye with their beauty, others to delight his ear with their music: some to supply him with food, and some with clothing: some to save his own muscular strength in doing his work—some to bear him about. Thirdly: They are endowed with sensibility and intelligence. They have all feeling, and some a good degree of sagacity, amounting to something like reflection. They feel our treatment.*

II. THAT CRUELTY TOWARDS THE LOWER ANIMALS IS WICKED.

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." Cruelty is wickedness. Man sins against God as truly in his conduct towards animals as in his conduct towards man. There is a divine law-" Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." (Deut. xxv. 4.) "Send . . . now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought. home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die." (Ex. ix. 19.) Great is the difference between the heart of a righteous and that of a wicked man. The righteous is kind even to his beast, and the kindest treatment of the wicked is but cruelty.

"I would not enter on my list of friends (Though graced with polish'd manners and fine sense,

Yet wanting sensibility) the man Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm. An inadvertent step may crush the snail That crawls at evening in the public

path; But he that has humanity, forewarn'd, Will tread aside and let the reptile live.'* COWPER.

(LXXX.)

MANLY INDUSTRY AND PARASITICAL INDOLENCE.

"He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread; but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding."—Prov. xii. 11.

IT is implied that all men want

^{*} See a work for children, entitled "Animal Sagacity," by Mrs. Hall. Published by Partridge and Co.

"bread"—the means of physical sustentation—and that this bread is to come through human indus-The earth spontaneously try. yields what irrational creatures require, because they are not endowed with aptitude for cultivation. Man is thus endowed, and his Maker will not do for him that which he has given him power to do for himself. Labour is not the curse of the fall; it is a blessed condition of life. in innocence had to cultivate Eden. The text presents two

subjects of thought. I. MANLY INDUSTRY. First: He has manly industry indicated. An agricultural specimen of work is given. "He that tilleth his land "-Agriculture is the oldest, the divinest, the healthiest, and the most necessary branch of human industry. Secondly: He manly industry rewarded. "Bread" comes as the result. He is "satisfied with bread." All experience shows that, as a rule, proper cultivation of the soil is all that man requires to satisfy his wants. God sends round the seasons, and when man does his work, those seasons carry their respective blessings to the race. Skilled industry is seldom in want.

"Thrift is a blessing
If men steal it not."
SHAKESPERE.

PARASITICAL INDOLENCE. This Solomon seems to put as an antithesis to the former. "He that followeth vain persons is void of understanding." The word vain may perhaps be taken to represent persons in a little higher grade of life, and who are, more or less, independent of labour. First: There are those who hang on such persons for their support. Instead of working with manly independence, they are looking to the patronage of others. They fawn, flatter, and wheedle for

bread, instead of labouring. These base-natured people are found in every social grade, and they disgrace their race, and clog the wheels of progress. Secondly: Persons who thus hang on others for their support are fools. are void of understanding." (1.)Because they neglect the fundamental condition of manly development. Industry is essential to strength of body, force of intellect, and growth of soul. "It is bad policy," says our great dramatist, "when more is got by "Man begging than working." should not eat of honey like a drone from others' labour." Because they sacrifice self-respect. The man who loses selfrespect, loses the true feeling of his manhood, and such a loss must come to him who lives the life of a parasite. (3.) Because they expose themselves to degrading annovances. The parasite's feeling will depend upon the looks, the words, and the whims of his patron. He will be subject to exactions, insults, and disappointments.

(No. LXXXI.)

THE CRAFTY AND THE HONEST.

"The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit. The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble."—Prov. xii. 12, 18.

THESE words lead us to notice two opposite principles in human character: craftiness, and honesty.

I. CRAFTINESS. "The wicked desireth the met of evil men." The idea is that the wicked desire to be as apt in all the stratagems by which advantage is obtained of others, as the most cunning of evil men. Two remarks here. First: Craft is an instinct of wickedness. "The wicked desireth the net of evil men." The men of the

world charge Christians with hypocrisy. No true Christian is a hypocrite. The better a man is, the less temptation he has to disguise himself, and the more inducements to unveil his heart to society. On the contrary, a wicked man must be hypocritical in proportion to his wickedness. Were his polluted heart and dishonest purposes fully to appear, society would shun him as a demon. To maintain a home, therefore, in social life, and to get on in his trade or profession, he must be as artful as the old serpent himself. Craftiness is essential to sin. Sin came into the world through craft. The devil deceived our progenitors. Sin is ever cunning: wisdom is alone true. Cunning is the low mimicry of wisdom ;-it is the fox, not the Socrates of the soul. Secondly: Craftiness is no security against "The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips." Lies are the language of craftiness. The crafty uses them as concealment and defence, but the eternal

law of providence makes them snares. One lie leads to another, and so on, until they become so numerous, that the author involves himself in contradictions, and he falls and founders like a wild beast in a snare.

II. Honesty. First: Honesty is strong in its own strength. It has a root. The root of the righteous. It does not live by cunning and stratagems, but by its own natural force and growth. Honesty has roots that will stand all storms. Secondly: Honesty will extricate from difficulties. The just man may get into trouble, and often does, but by his upright principles, under God, he shall come out of them. "Honesty is the best policy." It may have difficulties, it may involve temporary trouble, but it will ultimately work out deliverance.

"An honest soul is like a ship at sca, That sleeps at anchor on the ocean's calm; But when it rages, and the wind blows high, She cuts her way with skill and ma-

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

iestv."

SHAKESPEARE'S APHORISMS ON JUSTICE.

"In the corrupted currents of this world

Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,

And in worst times the wretched prize itself

Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above;

There is no shuffling; there the action lies

In its true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,

E'en to the teeth and forehead of orr faults,

To give in evidence."

"Take heed:—for God holds vengeance in his hand,

To hurl upon their heads that break his law."

"God needs no indirect nor lawless course,

To cut off those who have offended Him."

"Heaven is above all yet; there sits a Judge
That no king can corrupt."

"Heaven is the widow's champion and defence."

"God does defend us when our cause is just."

- "Guilt still feeds its judgment even here."
- "The heavens are armed against perjured kings."
- "Judgment in truth belongs to God alone."
- "Most just is God, who rights the innocent."
- "Heaven is most just, and of our pleasant vices
- Makes instruments to scourge us."
- "Foul practices turn on their authors."
- "To wrong-doers, the revolution of time brings retribution."
- "States which have long gone on, and filled the time With all licentious measure,

making their will

The scope of justice, come to an
evil end."

SHAKESPEARE'S APHORISMS ON PROVIDENCE.

"Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well, When our deep plots do fail. And

that should teach us There's a divinity that shapes our

ends, Rough hew them how we will."

- "There is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow."
- "Heaven hath a hand in all events."
- "What Providence delays, it not
- denies."
 "He that doth the ravens feed,
 Yea, providentially caters for the
- sparrow, Will comfort man's old age."
- "All good ascribe to Providence Divine."

SHAKESPEARE'S APHORISMS ON MERCY.

- "Whereto serves mercy, but to confront the visage of offence?"
- "If the worst offender may find mercy in the law, 'tis his."
- "Morality and mercy live in the tongues of princes: mercy should live ever in their hearts."
- "No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
- Not the King's crown, nor the deputed sword,
- The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe

Become them with one-half so good a grace As mercy does."

" How should we be

If He which is the top of judgment should

But judge us as we are? Oh, think on that,

And mercy she will breathe within our lips,

Like men new-made."

"All the souls that were forfeit once,

And he that might the 'vantage best have taken,

Found out the remedy."

"It is excellent

To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous To use it like a giant."

"Merciful Heaven!

Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt Splitt'st the unwedgeable and

gnarled oak, Than the soft myrtle! O, but

Than the soft myrtle! O, but man, proud man,

(Drest in a little brief authority, Most ignorant of what he's most assured,

His glassy essence) like an angry ape.

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,

As make the angels weep."

"Could great men thunder As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet:

For every pelting, petty officer Would use his heaven thunder."

"Pity is the virtue of the law; And none but tyrants use it cruelly."

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd ;

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven

Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest.

It blesseth Him that gives, and Him that takes. 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest:

it becomes The throned monarch better than

his crown:

His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, The attribute to awe, majesty.

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.

But mercy is above this sceptred sway:

It is enthroned in the hearts of kings:

It is an attribute of God Himself: And earthly power doth then show likest God's

When mercy seasons justice."

"Who crimes fromwould pardon'd be, In mercy should set others free."

"How should men hope for mercy, showing none?"

"We do pray for mercy, And that same prayer doth teach us all to render The deeds of mercy."

Literary Aotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end, Since none can compass more than they intend.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY GUSTAVE DORE. Part I. THE HOLY BIBLE. London: Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.

THE peculiar attractions of this edition of the Bible are, beautiful execution and material, very large and elegant type, a broad and ample page, and illustrations which are graphic, powerful, and mag-The last feature is of course the most prominent and imposing. The splendid genius of Gustave Doré imparts a charm and majesty to everything it touches and we were therefore quite prepared to find here many fascinating and wonderful effects as the result of its efforts to illustrate the wondrous scenes of the most wonderful of volumes. Even the cynical pedantry of certain selfconstituted judges of "High Art," must admit that all reasonable expectations have been completely realised in the productions before us: and candid minds will cheerfully testify that their anticipations of what the great artist would do are all surpassed as they look at what he has done. We have never beheld illustrations which gave so much reality and life to Bible story. Visions and events, long known to the intellect, seem to be recalled from the ages to be reenacted before us, and appear to pass before the eye as in a sublime drama. In the representation of all the varied scenes, the delicate conception, brilliant fancy, and vivid imagination of the artist have been equal to their task. The work is in all respects a great success, and a most valuable addition to the attractions of any home.

Moore's Irish Melodies. Lalla Rookh; National Airs; Legend-MAY Ballads, Songs, &c. With a Memoir by J. F. Waller, LL.D. London: Wm. Mackenzie.

This is the best edition of Moore's poems which has been published. In every mechanical and artistic respect it is as near to perfection as a book can be. A splendid embossed cover of green and gold encloses, on superb paper, a profusion of the choicest illustrations of the conceptions of the poet, together with a judicious, copious, and entertaining sketch of his life and works by Dr. J. F. Waller. The magnificence of the publication admits of nothing but admiration and praise. The character of all Moore's poetry is a different matter, and one as to which uniformity of opinion is not needed or expected. In a hearty appreciation of the genius of the poet, and in a love for many of his exquisite lyrics now inseparably woven into our literature, there must, however, always be a ground of common agreement amongst the lovers of the beautiful. And for this reason, as Lord Russell has observed, that "the world, so long as it can be moved by sympathy, and exalted by fancy, will not willingly let die the tender strains and pathetic fires of a true poet." After a searching trial, by fair and unfair criticism, the best of Moore's poems-so tender in feeling and so musical in cadence-live amongst us, with a great popularity—a popularity which is destined to increase, and which, as regards many of them, deserves, to endure perpetually. Whoever is desirous of purchasing Moore's poems, and at the same time wishes to place with them upon the drawing-room table a literary and artistic gem, which all the products of the kind and of the season cannot surpass, will thank us for directing his attention to this charming volume.

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO. Translated into English, with an Analysis and Notes, by John Llewelin Davies, M.A., and David James Vaughan, M.A. Third Edition. London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co.

Our indignation at the malignant wickedness, often causes us to over-estimate the ultimate importance of, unjust criticism. cannot too often remember what Lord Macaulay calls "that fine apothegm of Bentley," that "no man was ever written down except by himself." The works of Plato are a splendid example of the impotence of time, or opposition, to crush a true book. The works of some great men have been kept alive by their biographers, as in Dr. Johnson's case. Of Plato's life we do not possess sufficient facts to enable us to realise his personality, much less to interest us in him as a man; nor are there any extraneous accessories which have contributed to his fame. We must conclude that it is the inherent worth of his works alone which has preserved them for twenty-three centuries, and which now necessitates their production in a translated and popular form. The edition of Plato's masterpiece, "The Republic," which Messrs. Macmillan have just issued as one of their excellent and portable "Golden Treasury Series," is the result of the joint labours of two well-known scholars, J. Llewelyn Davies, M.A., and David James Vaughan, M.A., late Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge. Their names will at once suggest the fidelity and accuracy with which they have translated into English, and the careful industry with which the volume has been prepared and furnished with its copious "notes"; and the value of its condensed yet interesting "introduction," and discriminating and clear "analysis." It is convenient in size, chaste in appearance, and in all respects admirable and commendable for what is outside and what is within.

Possibilities of Caeation; or, What the World Might have Been.—A Book of Fancies. London: Simpkin and Marshall. This book is a remarkable one, and its object is noble. Its speciality is that its author deals "with things as they might have been, instead of discussing them exclusively as they are." In order to make us appreciate more highly the wonderful power and benevolence of God, he indicates, with great learning and skill, what the phenomens of Nature might have been under the direction of a malevolent tormentor or arbitrary despot. The wonderful wisdom of the Creator shown in a variety of instances, in which it is demonstrated that the powers of no single element in nature, as Dr. Faraday says, "could be modified without destroying the harmonies and involving in one common ruin the economy of the World." His love of speculation conducts the author over ground where any other than a first-class

man would be, or have the appearance of being, irreverent, or even impious. But a skill which is splendid, a delicacy which is always keen, and a judgment which is never at fault, enable him to steer clear of such charges, and even suspicions, and to pursue his original, bold, and impressive arguments to their full limits without even the faintest obscuration of the pure, humble, and Christian spirit which prompts them. The style, or rather, we should say, the styles of the book-for it has many-are most fascinating. Pages of light and playful speculation give place to close reasoning and calm narration, and these again are succeeded by those in which is a brilliant and sustained eloquence which is equal to the best efforts of the greatest masters. Facts, some amusing, others striking, and many the result of much research, are plentifully scattered over the leaves, so that there is something to satisfy all tastes. We believe the work is calculated to do a large measure of service. The author, whose name does not transpire, is evidently a man of ripe scholarship, refined feeling, and conspicuous ability. We shall be disappointed if his wonderful and excellent book does not make a powerful impression.

MICAH, THE PRIEST-MAKER. A Handbook on Ritualism. By T. BINNEY. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.

THE ritualistic section of what is called the Church of England is, perhaps, for the present hour the most influential, and that in a way unintentional on its own part. It does not aim to awaken thought, nor is its ministry potent in this direction. But during the past few months it has set the best minds of England a-thinking. Whilst there is sad lack of suggestiveness in its pulpit, its upholsterings, tailorings, millineries, jewelleries, and theatricals, have, by their glaring incongruity with the Christianity of the Gospel, broken the mental monotony of the Protestant world, and set its preachers and writers to work. Sermons, tracts, pamphlets, volumes are flowing from the press, and force their way to the table of reviewers. Whilst many of these productions are so one-sided, unphilosophic, and acrimonious, as to render them utterly unworthy of notice, there are others that reflect the highest credit on the intellect, catholic spirit, and literary ability of their authors. At the head of these we place the volume before us. Mr. Binney treats the subject as an able philosopher, an impartial judge, an unbigoted Christian, and an accomplished author. It is the book on the subject. We have seen nothing as good, and we expect nothing better.



AHOMILY

03

The "Letter" and the "Spirit" in the Ministry of Christianity.

"Able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."—2 Cor. iii. 6.

HIS chapter teaches that the grand subject of all true religious teaching in these last ages of the world is Christianity, called in the text the "New Testament." The New Testament means God's revelation through Christ, in contradistinction to his revelation through Moses. These two forms of divine communication are, in the context, brought into comparison, and several points of contrast emerge into prominence.* Though both are admitted to be "glorious," the latter is shown to be "more glorious" for many reasons. The one is the dispensation of "righteousness," the other of "condemnation;" the one is permanent, remaining unchanged amid the revolution of ages; the other is "done away," and the one so opens the spiritual . faculties that the mind can look at it "with open face;" the other, through the prejudices of the Jewish people was concealed by a "veil." Judaism was enwrapped in haziness, Christianity comes out in sunshine.

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^{*} See Homilist, vol. ii., second series, p. 421.

Now, this Christianity is the grand subject of all true modern ministries, the one primary text of religious discourses the world over and the ages through. I say Christianity—not naturalism. Had man retained his primitive innocence nature would have been that grand text. All sermons would have been drawn from the budding earth and the sparkling skies; from the murmuring brook and the booming billow; the beasts of the forests and the fowls of heaven. Men would have seen in nature what they see not now-true ideas of God-and found there the food of souls:all the parts of material nature would have been regarded as embodiments of divine thought and symbols of eternal. truths. But since the Fall men cannot reach the spiritual significance of nature; and if they could, it would not be what they required to meet their spiritual exigencies and improve their spiritual condition. I say, moreover, Christianity-not Judaism. Judaism, it is true, came to meet man's fallen condition; it worked on for centuries, rendered high services, and became effête. Do I disparage this grand old institution? Far from it. It was here flaming as Truth's grand torch through many an age; it broke the moral darkness of successive generations, and lighted great multitudes "which no man can number" into the calm heavens of eternity. But it had its day, and is no more; it is "done away." On the great plains of human history it lies as a shell—a shell whose germ of truth burst it asunder, and expanded into a loftier and more enduring form :- "The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us."

Christianity, then, and not either naturalism or Judaism, is now the grand subject of all true religious ministry. We are ministers of the "New Testament." The text leads us to consider the twofold ministry of this subject and their twofold results.

I. THE TWOFOLD MINISTRY. There is the ministry of the "letter" and the ministry of the "spirit." What does this mean? Not, I think, the two different dispensations of the

truth, the Mosaic and the Christian. Although the chapter contains a comparison between these, the text does not. On the contrary, the New Testament only is the subject of the text. Besides, it would scarcely be fair to denominate Judaism a "letter." There was spirit in every part. Every rite symbolized a thought, every sentence a sentiment. Spirit, like the sap of a young and healthy tree in spring, filled the trunk, and throbbed from root to stem. Was there no spirit in the revelations of Sinai? Were Moses and Elias, David, Isaiah, and all the Hebrew prophets, passionless men of the "letter?" No, they were men of enthusiasm; the spirit of eternal truth glowed in them as truly and as intensely, if not as clearly, as in any of the apostles of Christ.

Nor does it mean, I think, a double interpretation of the Scripture. There are some interpreters who seek a mystic, as well as a literal, meaning in every utterance. The attaching of a plurality of meanings to the same Scripture utterance is a lamentable practice, and one of the saddest of the many profanations of ignorant pietism. It is an insult to reason, and an outrage on the grammar and the design of God's book. What, then, does "spirit and letter" mean here? Simply, the word and the thought, the sentence and the sentiment. Christianity has "letter" and "spirit." If it had no "letter," it would be unrevealed to men :-- a thought shut up in the mind of God; and if it had mere "letter," and no "spirit," it would be hollow sound, empty jargon. All essences, principles, spirits, are invisible to us; they are only revealed through letters or forms. The spirit of a nation expresses itself in its institutions; the spirit of the creation expresses itself in its phenomena; the spirit of Jesus, in his wonderful biography. By "letter," therefore, I understand the form of a thing in contradistinction to its essence, the word in contradistinction to its meaning, the institution in contradistinction to its genius. The text, therefore, refers to two distinct methods of teaching Christianity. Let us notice each of these.

First. The technical. Who are the technical teachers of

Christianity ? (1.) The verbalists. There are those professed teachers of the Gospel who deal mainly in terminologies. Words are almost everything. In the Corinthian Church there were those who unduly exalted verbiage. They thought much of the "words of man's wisdom." Sonorous periods, polished sentences, and rhetoric ornament, they scrupulously studied. No word would I utter against the use of the choicest language in teaching Gospel truth. Our vocabularies have no symbols good enough fully to represent its heavenly sublimities. Still, the divine thing ever comes out best in the language which nature teaches, whether that language be rustic or refined. All thought runs into language as life into form, and the language into which the thought runs at first is, I trow, generally the best; it is its native costume; the robe that nature weaves. He who studies to modify and decorate it, loses the spirit. The spirit of thought is so subtle that it goes off in the attempt to give it an artificial form. He, too, who ties men to the mere letter of Scripture conceals, both from himself, and those who follow him, the divine spirit which words may indicate but cannot contain.

We ask again, who are the technical teachers of Christianity?

- (2.) The theorists. There are those who throw into logical systems the ideas they derive from the Gospel. These systems, which are mere human productions, they hold up as standards of truth, and use all the power they have to enforce them on the faith of others. I underrate not the importance of systematising the ideas we derive from the Bible—the soul has an instinct for throwing its thoughts into order, and linking them together in unity. But he who exalts his system of thought, and makes it a standard of truth, is a minister of the "letter." Can any system of theology, however comprehensive, contain the whole spirit of truth? Can a nutshell contain the Atlantic? Who are the technical teachers?
- (3.) The Ritualists. I have but little sympathy with the unqualified denunciations of ritualism which ring, just now,

through the pulpits and press of England. Men must have ritualism of some kind. What is logic, but the ritualism of thought? What is art,, but the ritualism of beauty? What is rhetorical imagery, but the ritualism of ideas? As life in the tiniest seed struggles after some form, human thought strives after visible embodiments. Civilization is but the ritualising of the thoughts of ages. But when the religious teacher regards these rites, signs, and symbols as supernatural elements, or as some mystic media of saving grace, he is a minister of the "letter" rather than of the "spirit" of Christianity.

Secondly: The spiritual. What is it to be a minister of the spirit? It is not to neglect the letter. The letter is a wonderful thing, it is a symbol of the Divine. The material universe is a "letter." Letter is the key that lets you into the great empire of spiritual realities. To be a minister of the spirit, is to be more alive to the grace than the grammar, the substances than the symbols of the book. Two things seem necessary in order to qualify a man to be a minister of the "spirit." (1.) A comprehensive knowledge of the whole Scriptures. What is the spirit of Christianity? Not a doctrine contained in this book or that, this chapter or that, this verse or that, but the general principles that pervade the whole Book. Hence to reach the spirit it will not do to study isolated passages, or live in detached portions. We must compare "spiritual things with spiritual," and, by a wise and a just induction, reach its universal truths. Can you get botany from a few flowers, or astromony from a few stars, or geology from a few fossils? No more can you get the spirit of Christianity from a few isolated texts. There must be (2) a practical sympathy with the spirit of The spirit of Christ is Christianity, and unless we have a practical sympathy with that spirit, we shall never understand it. We must have love to understand love. Those moral attributes of which we are utterly destitute. can never be appreciated by us. The faculty of interpreting the Bible is of the heart rather than the intellect.

unsophisticated heart sees truths in the light of the open day that are utterly concealed from carnal souls. understand biblical literature and be ignorant of the Bible. We may be able verbal biblical expositors, acute reasoners on the doctrines, and eloquent discoursers on the great merits of the book, and vet no teachers. If we are mere intellectual teachers, we tread the cold fields of theory, not the realms of glowing love; and we never touch the path where the rose of Sharon blooms. We must be spiritual Christians to teach spiritual Christianity; Christianity must be in us, not merely as a system of ideas, but as a life, if we would extend "Great is the truth, and it will prevail," said Lord Bacon. This is often quoted on missionary platforms, and because Christianity is held to be true, men are urged to believe in its ultimate conquest of the world. But the aphorism requires qualification. The prevailing power of truth depends upon its meeting the antagonist in its own form. If error existed merely in books, then by books truth would prevail; or if in argument, then by arguments might truth prevail; but error is interwoven into our institutions, our habits, our every-day life, our very souls; and ruth therefore, in merely book or speech, will never conquer it; it must come out in the form in which Jesus and his disciples brought it out-not in the "letter," but in the "spirit."

II. THE TWOFOLD RESULTS. THIS TWOFOLD MINISTRY HAS TWOFOLD RESULTS. Observe—

First: The result of the technical ministry of Christianity. It "killeth." (1.) The verbalist "kills." The man who is perplexing his readers with refined criticisms, or dazzling them with rhetorical language, or tying them down to the mere verbalism of Scripture, is killing his hearers. The sentence of Hobbes is become proverbial: "Words are the counters of wise men, but the money of fools." Fools take words not as the representatives of worth, but as worth, as money itself. In the religious world there are words such as

"justification," "sanctification," "election," "adoption," which the masses of Gospel hearers adopt as precious things, whilst they are utterly ignorant, and, therefore, unappreciative, of the divine realities they are intended to represent. Words in religion, when they are taken for things, kill inquiry, freedom, sensibility, earnestness, enthusiasm, moral manhood. It was said by Burke, "That no man comprehends less of the majesty of the English constitution than the Nisi-Prius lawyer, who is always dealing with the technicalities and precedents." As truly we may say, that no man understands less of the grand spirit of the Gospel than he who is constantly dealing with the verbalities of religion.

(2.) The theorist kills. The man who is preaching his own little system of theology, in the place of the free Gospel of God, is killing souls. The Jews formulated a theory of the Messiah. In their theory He was to appear in such a form, and He was to do such a work, and He was to reach such a destiny. Their theory, which was derived from the Scriptures, as men now derive their theology, killed them. He came, He did not answer to their theory; they held to their theory, rejected Him, and were damned. They were killed. Souls cannot feed upon our dogmas. There are those who hold four or "five points," which they call the doctrine of grace, and preach as the full Gospel of God. The teachers who do not ring those out in every discourse, they denounce as not preaching a full Gospel. Under the dogmas of these men souls are starved. The smallest seed you plant in your garden requires all the elements of nature to feed on, and grow to perfection. The gases of the soil, the flowing atmosphere, the gentle dews, the copious showers, the shadow of evening, and the rays of noon, all must minister to it ere it can reach perfection; and can souls live and grow on the few dogmas of an antiquated creed? Never. must have the "unsearchable riches" of truth, if they are to reach maturation.

Thirdly: The Ritualist kills. He who exalts even the lawful rites of the Gospel, such as Baptism and the Lord's

Supper, to say nothing of unauthorised, and in some cases absurd, rites and observances, kills souls. The ceremonial Church has ever been a dead Church. "Letter teaching" then, including the verbal, the theoretic, and the ritualistic, kills souls. It reduced the Jewish people to a "valley of dry bones." It entombed the soul of Europe during the centuries of Papal sway.

Secondly: The result of the spiritual ministry of Christianity. "It giveth life." "It is the Spirit," said Christ, "that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." He who in his teaching and in his life brings out most of the benign, hallowing, loving, soul-quickening, and soul-ennobling spirit of the Gospel, will be most successful, under God, in giving life to souls. His ministry will be like the breath of spring, quickening all its touches into life. Such a ministry was that of Peter's on the day of Pentecost. Words, theories, rites, to him were nothing. Divine facts and their spirit were the all in all of his discourse, and dead souls bounded into life as he spoke—their graves were opened, and those who slept arose and entered the holy city of truth.

Brothers, how are you dealing with Christianity? Are you living amidst its verbalism? Its literature is beautiful: but if you remain there it will kill you. Are you living amidst its theology? Its theology is sublime; but if you remain there it will kill you. Are you living amidst its ritualism? Its rites are few and simple; but if you remain in them they will kill you. "The flesh profiteth nothing, the spirit giveth life." "Circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth nothing, but a new creature in Christ Jesus." little of this soul-life we have in our congregations! Creedlife, sect-life, church-life we have, but this is not soul-lifethe life of holy love, of independent action, of earnest inquiry. of spiritual freedom and enthusiastic devotion to all that is Christ-like and divine. A "letter" ministry of Christianity is the death of souls.

A Momiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the Acrs of the Apostles, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its wides truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

Subject: Paul's Final Visit to Jerusalem. (Continued.)

"And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together; and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar: who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him. And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."—Acts xxi. 27—39.

AVING noticed the treatment Paul met with by the evangelical Christians at Jerusalem, we proceed to look at—

II. HIS TREATMENT BY THE INTOLERANT JEWS. One might have hoped that Paul's effort to conciliate the Jews by complying with legal ceremonies, would have averted their hostility. But it was not so. Before the "seven days" he was spending in efforts at ceremonial conciliation, were ended, the hostility of the Jews from Asia, who now crowded the temple at the national festival, rose into violent action: "And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help." The narrative here given of their hostility, reveals two subjects.

First. The genius of religious intolerance. Three things come out in the conduct of these Jews which always characterize the spirit of religious intolerance. (1.) Cunning. This is indicated in the watchword they employed to rouse the populace—" Men of Israel, help!" hereby naively intimating that Paul was an enemy to all Israel; that he was the opponent of every Jew, and that all should make a common cause in crushing him. Artifice has ever been the instrument of religious bigotry. Its miserable genius works by inuendo and insinuation. Another characteristic of religious intolerance is, (2.) Falsehood. It fabricates false allegations. "This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place." Now this was all a spiteful fiction. Did Paul "teach all men everywhere against the people?" It is true he often denounced their bigotry, and their exclusiveness, but never a word of his was spoken against their race, and their high distinctions. Did he ever disparage "the law?" Never. It is true he

often taught that its ceremonies were not binding upon Gentile disciples, nor of eternal obligation even upon the Jew. But he never defamed it, never spoke of it with contempt. In truth, he ever displayed a profound regard for it as a grand, old, and divine institution, the glory of the ancient world. Did he ever speak "against this place"—the temple itself? It is true that he taught that God dwelt not "in temples made with hands," but was to be worshipped everywhere. But never a word did he utter in dishonour of the temple. Did he ever bring "Greeks into the temple, and pollute the holy place"? This would have been a most criminal offence, and one punishable with death. For, although there was a court of the Gentiles within the precincts of the temple, into which Gentiles were allowed admission, their entrance into "the holy place," or court of the Israelites, was strongly prohibited. Inscriptions were written upon the pillars, prohibiting any but a Jew to cross the fatal threshold. Philo says it was certain death for any one who was not a Jew to set his foot within the inner courts of the temple. According to a speech which Josephus puts into the mouth. of Titus, the Jews were suffered by the Romans themselves to kill even a Roman who guiltily entered this sacred place. But there was no evidence that the apostle ever took a Gentile within the sacred enclosure. The reason they had for the charge was a baseless supposition-"Trophimus," whom they "supposed" that Paul had brought into the temple. They "supposed"—they did not know it—they, perhaps, saw Paul walking in the streets with him, and they rushed to the conjecture.

But whilst those charges are so utterly groundless, they bear testimony to three things concerning Paul. 1. His notoriety. "This is the man," implying that he is well known, and that none in the city requires any further particulars concerning him. This Paul has in a few short years rung his name into the ear of all Israel, and painted his image on the imagination of the Jewish people. These charges bear witness to, (2.) His industry. They state that "he taught all men, everywhere."

Thus, they unwittingly confirmed the apostle's own description of his labours, and also his biographer's account of his marvellous activity. These charges bear witness to, (3.) His power. Their charges imply more than their sense of his notoriety and indefatigability. They testify to his amazing influence over the age and land in which he lived. Had he been an obscure man, and of feeble influence, they would not have spoken or acted as they did. They felt he was not one of the common horde, whom they could easily crush, but a man of such colossal influence as required the force of a whole nation to arrest and confine.

There is yet another characteristic hereof of religious intolerance, (4.) Violence. We are told, they "laid hands on him;" "they drew him out of the temple;" "they went about to kill him;" and, more than this, they scourged him, for, we are told, "they left beating of Paul." Violence has ever marked the history of religious intolerance. It does not argue, for it lacks an intelligent faith in its own cause. It has, therefore, ever had recourse to fraud and force. The tongue of slander, the arm of law, and the implements of persecution, it substitutes for reason and suasion. The narrative of the hostility reveals—

Secondly: The genius of a mob assembly. Men are pretty well the same in all ages. The same classes, under similar circumstances, come out in similar phases. Mobs are the same everywhere, and in all time. The mob gathered in the streets of Jerusalem evinced just those things which mobs show now in Paris, New York, or London. Here is—(1.) Credulousness. The false cry raised by the Asiatic Jews, and the false charges made, were taken up at once, were accepted at once, without any inquiry. "All the city was moved." Man is naturally a credulous animal. He has a propensity for believing. And this propensity gets intensity in association with numbers. Hence it often turns out that what even a credulous man will not believe when alone, he readily accepts when issuing from the lip of a demagogue in a vast assembly. Men accept creeds in churches which they

almost repudiate in private discussion. Mobs are awfully credulous. They will swallow whatever is offered, without testing it by taste, or masticating it by inquiry. (2.) Senselessness. Why did the people rush forth from their houses, pour along the streets, and crowd about the temple, in one vast and tumultuous mass? What did they know about the charges made against Paul? Nothing. Hence, when the chief captain "came near and demanded to know who Paul was, and what he had done," some cried one thing and some another." They had no intelligent account to give. Reason had abdicated the throne: they were the mere creatures of impulse. The mob in the streets of Ephesus on a previous occasion (Acts xix. 32) acted in the same way. Then, also, "some cried one thing and some another, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together." A sad sight this. A vast multitude of human beings moved not by intelligent motives, but by blind impulse. It is this senselessness that makes the opinions of mobs so worthless, their movements so reckless, and their existence so dangerous. (3.) Contagionableness. So liable were the multitudes to be affected by the iniquitous opinions of those Asiatic Jews that no sooner were they uttered than this contagion was felt through the city. "The people ran together," and when they came together their hearts surged with the same common passions. Their blood was heated with the same thought, their minds inspired with the same purpose. Their leaders, the bigots, said "Men of Israel help," and the "people ran together," and "the multitude of the people followed after, crying, away with him." With all our metaphysical science, how little we know of the many subtle elements by which man influences his fellow. How amazing it is, that one man's thought, whether good or bad, may influence a nation, making millions burn with the fire of a common sentiment.

III. HIS TREATMENT BY THE ROMAN AUTHORITY. "The chief captain of the band" having heard that all Jerusalem

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was in an uproar, came in and took him, and commanded, and demanded who he was and what he had done." It appears from chapter xxiii. 26, that the name of this chief captain was Claudius Lysias. He was in charge of the garrison of the citadel of Antonio, near the temple. In the conduct of this Roman officer here, the following facts are observable. (1.) His presence checked the violence of the people. Having heard that all Jerusalem was in an uproar, he "immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down with them." Having probably a thousand men under his command, he hurried forth with a good body of soldiers to quell the disturbance. The sight of him put a stop to the cruelty that was being inflicted upon Paul. Mobs are great cowards. A few soldiers, as in this case, can overawe a mighty multitude. (2.) By his command Paul was bound in chains. He "commanded him to be bound with two chains. The peace was broken. He supposed Paul to be the cause of it. His duty was to maintain order, and hence, perhaps, he thus captures Paul for future investigation. The Roman method of safe-keeping was to chain the hands and feet of the prisoner, fastening him to a soldier on either side. (3.) By his inquiries he fruitlessly sought to know the cause of the tumult. He "demanded who he was and what he had done." This was proper as a government officer. But in vain he sought the information; "some cried out one thing and some another among the multitude." The mass had no reason at all, and the few who had, felt perhaps that the reason was too bad to mention. (4.) He directed Paul to he taken to the castle. This castle of Antonio, situated north of the temple, orginally erected by the Maccabees and called Baris, was rebuilt by Herod the Great, with much splendour and many conveniences for the soldiers stationed in it, and named after Mark Antony. Its strength as a fortress was great; and it was so situated as to command the temple. Paul was conducted thither, probably in order to disperse the multitude, and to allow a further investigation. The soldiers bore him up the stairs on account of the violence

of the people. (5.) He misunderstood his history. "And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak with thee? Who said, canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian (xx. see note) which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. The fact that he made this mistake plainly indicates that he did not much concern himself with the religious history of the Jews, and felt no interest whatever in the progress of the Christian religion. (6.) He granted him permission to address the people. Paul's reply to his question threw new light upon his mind, and, no doubt, convinced him that his prisoner was no ordinary man. The apostle did not here exaggerate the importance of his birthplace, for Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia, and was famous for its schools of philosophy, and the high refinement and wealth of its people. Xenophon in his Anabasis calls Tarsus "a great and flourishing city;" and Josephus says that "it was the metropolis and most renowned city among the Cilicians." The bearing and the spirit of Paul in his answer induced the Roman to grant his request, and "he gave him license." The wonderful advantage of this license to Paul then and there to speak, will appear in the sequel.

Conclusion.—From the whole, many important subjects rise into prominence. We shall only mention three:—

First: The great mixture of characters in social life. Here in Jerusalem, now what a diversity of character figures on the stage. Here are the Evangelical Christians under the presidency of James the Apostle; here are the Asiatic Jews animated by all the malice of religious exclusiveness and intolerance; and here are the Romans, despising it may be alike the religion of the Jew and Christian, but inflexible in their loyalty to legal order; and here is Paul exhibiting a type of spiritual nobility unapproached by the greatest of his age. Such is a picture of human society as it has ever been

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and as it still appears. Though all, in every human community, are of the same origin, made of the same materials, organized upon the same natural type, related to the same grand moral system, and doomed to the same eternity, yet in thought, and feeling, and character, there is a marvellous diversity. Human souls differ in their character and spheres as the stars of heaven in their nature and their orbits.

Secondly: The great advantage of civil government. What enormities would not that infuriated and tumultuous mob surging there about the glorious old temple in Jerusalem have committed, had not the Roman officer and his soldiers showed their face and interposed? Paul was being beaten to death until the representative of civil law appeared. Civil governments are a necessity so long as society remains deprayed; and God in his mercy has ordained not of course their wrongs, nor perhaps their forms, but certainly their existence and their spheres.

Thirdly: The antagonism of the depraced heart to Christianity. Why was Paul that one central figure in Jerusalem now against which all that was corrupt in the city pelted its fury and hurled its anathemas? Simply because he embodied and radiated the pure morality, the spiritual worship and the universal love of the Gospel. Christianity clashes with the corrupt in human nature, stirs it into malice, and makes it rage with fury. Hence it is that its progress is ever a history of battles—battles fought on the arena of the sinner's heart.

Pomiletic Notes on the Epistle of James.

(No. I.)

Subject: The Ministry of James.

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting."—Jas. i. 1.*

HE subject of this sentence is the ministry of James, and these words teach us it was—

- I. A MINISTRY CONSCIOUSLY AUTHORISED BY GOD. "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." James had a special call to this service, and was endowed with the special qualification of the apostolic era. But it is also certain that every true minister is conscious of this authority. What gives that consciousness? First: Not merely delight in studying the truth of the Gospel. The study of all truth is fascinating, and there is none to rival in enchantment the great verities of which Scripture teaches. Secondly: Not merely enjoyment in discoursing about that
- * Among the apostles there were two who bore the name of James. One was the son of Zebedee, and the brother of John, and was put to death by Herod; and the other (known as the Less, probably in allusion to his stature) was the son of Alpheus, and, being a near kinsman of the Lord, was called his brother. This latter is generally concluded to have been the author of this epistle. As far as we can judge, all the writings of the apostles are in exact accordance with their characters, and bear the stamp of their authors' individuality. although Scripture biography does not make us so familiar with the writer of this epistle as with Peter, or John, or Paul, yet when we know that James, being superintendent of the mother church in the city and neighbourhood of Jerusalem, maintained there such a reputation as to win for him the title of "the Just," we recognize in every sentence of this letter the outgoings of such an intensely honest and earnest nature as his must have been. The epistle was probably written between A.D. 58 and 61, near the time of the apostle's martyrdom. It was addressed to the Christian Jews who were dispersed among the Gentiles. Its teachings can scarcely be summed in an argument, but are fraught with the most varied and important practical lessons.

truth. To be able to write or speak effectively on such transcendent themes, and to awaken the enthusiasm and influence the lives of men, might yield pleasure to a man who was utterly heedless of God and his Christ. Thirdly: Not even success in the proclamation of that truth. "Many shall say to Me in that day, have we not in Thy name done many wonderful works, and I shall say I never knew you." Fourthly: But oneness in heart with God and the Lord Jesus Christ. These servants cannot serve merely mechanically. To them Christ says, "Ye are my friends." The pledge of our soldiership, the credentials of our ambassage are to be found chiefly within us, not without and around. "Though I speak with the tongues," &c.

II. A MINISTRY AFFECTIONATELY ADDRESSED TO ALL. The apostle writes this familiar, affectionate "Hail" to all the twelve tribes. The true ministry never seeks to limit its love to one church, or to square its sympathies to one sect. No scattering, either of denomination or distance, hinders the desire that all may be taught—comforted—sanctified—saved.

III. A MINISTRY OCCASIONALLY WROUGHT BY WRITING. By this epistle James is as truly discharging his ministry as by preaching. Some things are noticeable about the ministry of writing as compared with that of speech. First: It is wider in its scope. In all lands and by millions of readers this epistle has been perused. Secondly: It is more permanent in its form. Books outlive men; they last through centuries; men but for years. The voice of the eloquent is soon dumb in death; the writings of some pens time will never erase. Thirdly: It is frequently more easily discharged. Parents, friends, all who write to dear and most distant ones, can discharge a ministry thus.

(No. II.)

God's School of Trial for the Good.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But

let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—Jas. i. 2—8.

Those whom James addresses as "My brethren" must be the good; for it is no source of joy for an evil man to be tried. Hence we are confident that the teaching here is with regard to the trials of the good. Trial is one of the schools in which God is teaching his children, and which they will more or less frequent till Death, the Father's messenger, fetches them home. We learn here—

I. THE DISCIPLINE OF THIS SCHOOL SHOULD BE CHEERFULLY MET. "Count it all joy," &c. Why? First: Because trials test our faith. Trials are manifold-"divers," physical, social, mental, spiritual, and all put our faith in God's goodness and justice to the test. These trials act upon true faith as the furnace on the metal; as the storm on the tree. Secondly: The working of faith develops patience. Patience is not obtuseness—an incapacity to perceive the evil; nor insensibility—an incapability of feeling it; nor stoicism—an endurance from the feeling of necessity. It is a loyal submission—a hearty acquiescence. Patience always requires faith. It is "enduring as seeing Him who is invisible." He has the most patience whose faith is strongest. Thus tribulation worketh patience. Thirdly: Patience tends to completeness of character. The words here mean "whole in every part," and the idea is that Christian perfection consists in the development of all the elements of Christian character. Character does not become perfect in a day; it is a gradual growth. Hence the need of patience.

II. THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS SCHOOL ARE OBTAINED BY PRAYER. First: Spiritual excellence is the chief subject of prayer. He only will benefit by the trials of life who uses a true spiritual judgment. Unless, as in all other things, a

man forms a true judgment of trials, he will never be advantaged by them. He will not reach nor apply their lessons. Second: The great God is the only object of prayer. He gives (1.) abundantly; (2.) generously Third: Unwavering confidence is the power of prayer. (1.) A man without confidence is the victim of inner conflict—double-minded, δίψυχος. He has two souls, running in different, and sometimes opposite, directions. So he is unstable in all his ways. How can he pray? Prayer requires earnestness; earnestness requires concentration; concentration requires strong faith. (2.) A man without confidence is the victim of external circumstances. As the winds to the waves, so are circumstances to a man without faith.

(No. III.)

Christian Brotherhood.

"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways."—Jas. i. 9—11.

I. Their circumstances. Are different. As a fact, the good here are found in different social grades—"high" and "low" degree. There is the prince and the pauper. This fact proves (1.) That circumstances are no test of character. There has been a common error, from Job's day to this, to the contrary, (2.) That Christians should be contented with their lot. Providence never intended all to be of the same degree. The sphere of one would no more suit another, than the orbit of one planet would do for another. (3.) That there are opportunities for the exercise of brotherly benevolence. If all were in the same grade, where would be the openings for charity! There are some naked to be clothed; some in prison to be visited, &c.

II. THEIR CAUSE FOR JOY IS THE SAME. What is the cause of joy amongst the true brotherhood? First: Not in external

circumstances. The apostle here teaches that all that is external is evanescent. "The sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass," &c. Second: But in spiritual triumph over circumstances. Grace makes the poor brother feel himself superior to circumstances. He is to rejoice when by contentment, and hope, and faith he is "exalted" above his low degree. This poverty does not crush him. Grace renders the "rich" brother humble amid his circumstances. This cause of joy in both cases is in the graces of the soul, not in the grade of life.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

Germs of Thought.

Subject: God's Secret and Shadow.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—Psa. xci. 1.

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UR text is a promise of priceless value to the tried, the tempted, the timid, and the fearful, as well as to the stalwart and courageous Christian. There is a place to which we can all fly, where we can all abide—a place that is under the immediate protection and guardianship of God Himself, and that is, "the secret place of the most High." But to be of service to us, our text must be understood; under the surface of the imagery here employed there lies a sublime and glorious truth. To evolve it, we invite you to notice—

I. THE POSITION INDICATED. 1. The place. "The secret place of the most High." This means, we think, we are to enter into and to abide in the secret of God. We are told, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." What intelligible or practical meaning can we attach to this?

See, here is God's word. It has its secret. You know the difference between the cursory reading of a friend's letter and the

reading of it so as to enter into the very thoughts, and feelings, and ideas of that friend-between reading it to get merely the information that it contains, and reading it so as to catch the very spirit of your friend, and to be able to place yourself in the self-same position in reference to the subject of which it treats, as he was himself when he wrote it. the letter thus is to enter into the secret of your friend, to enter into his secret place. You have views, and sympathies, and feelings all in common with him. Apply this to the Word of God. There are some who read it through chapter by chapter, and verse by verse, who have a large amount of superficial biblical knowledge, but who know comparatively nothing of its grand, glorious, momentous secrets. There are others who so read it that they grasp the real meaning, the grand spiritual realities that underlie its utterances; they so read it that they catch the very spirit of its Divine Author, so that the views formed and the feelings kindled towards the subjects of which it treats, are the same as God's. They look at them from God's point of view. Such may be said to enter into the secret of God, or into "the secret place of the most High."

See again: here is communion with God. It has its secret. You know the difference between talking to a friend and having communion with him. There are some into whose souls you can never enter. They may talk away glibly enough and long enough upon common-place matters. But here your sympathy and intercourse end; you have no consciousness of any outflowing of soul, or commingling of spirit. But there is another between whom and yourself intercourse will become so real and so mutual that he will give you back thought for thought, and feeling for feeling. That other soul seems to be a fac-simile of your own: the resemblance is so close and faithful, that you can read his thoughts, and feelings, and purposes by your own. By such intercourse you enter into the secret of your friend-into the secret place of his heart. Apply this to communion with God. There are some who say their prayers very regularly and very devoutly. So far as outward decorum and forms of speech are concerned, they are faultless. But communion with God there is none; they leave their closet as they enter it. They go through a cold form, or satisfy the sense of duty, but any outflowing, or uplifting of soul to God, there is none. There are others whose communion with Heaven is a sublime reality. The very presence of the Heavenly Father is consciously enjoyed. As such an one comes forth from the chamber of communion, you can see in his very countenance and hear in his very words, that his soul has been flowing out towards God, and that God has been flowing into his soul. The words uttered may have been but few, but there has been such a loving, confiding, filial opening of the heart before Heaven, that its glory has been beaming down with full power upon, and its joys streaming with full volume into, it. By such communion as this you are for the time under the direct power and influence of heaven, you are attracted into the inner circle of God's friendship, you have a foretaste of heaven's ecstatic rapture and joy.

"I stand upon the mount of God,
With sunlight in my soul;
I hear the storms in vales beneath,
I hear the thunders roll.

"But I am calm with thee, my God, Beneath these glorious skies; And to the height on which I stand Nor storms nor clouds can rise.

"Oh! this is life; oh! this is joy, My God, to find thee so; Thy face to see, thy voice to hear, And all thy love to know."

See again. There is the love of God. It has its secret. You know the difference between possessing a friend's respect and enjoying a friend's love. There are some whom you respect and esteem, but who have no place in your warm and ardent affection; and they may respect and esteem you, but you have no enjoyment of their love. When you meet you are polite, respectful, courteous to each other, but that is all.

There are others towards whom you feel a fond attachment, a union of heart, tendrils of affection laying hold of each other's being, with a grasp tender and loving, but firm and inseparable. Apply this to the love of God. There are some, and we fear professing Christians too, whose feelingstowards God are those of respectful and polite reserve. They know nothing of living in the love of God. They never approach God nearer than that of a respectful and polite subject to his sovereign. But there are others who get into-They are children. They cultivate kindred his very heart. sympathies, kindred tastes, kindred inspirations. They foster a tender, loving, filial spirit. The word "Father" on their lips, and in their hearts, is a sublime and glorious reality. They feel the loving, gracious emotions of his heart throbbing in their own. So real is their conception and realization of God's love, that never a fear, doubt, or misgiving crosses their minds, or conceals the smiles of his favour. Such enter into the secret of God's love; they breathe the atmosphere of God's love, they feel the inspiration of God's love, they feed their souls upon God's love. They dwell in God's heart.

See again. Here is the purpose of God. It has its secret. And you know the difference between a mere acquaintance with the purposes of others and a knowledge of them that awakens our deep interest, and that kindles our profound and active sympathy. We know the purposes and intentions of many men, but we feel little or no interest in them, it is a matter of indifference to us whether they succeed or fail. There are others with whom we have so closely identified ourselves, that their purposes are our purposes, and their success or failure ours. Apply this to the purpose of God. There are some who feel little or no interest in that which lies close to God's heart, engages his profoundest sympathies, and employs his untiring energies. They have never entered into that purpose, never felt its vital importance, never conceived its glorious design. Never seriously considered whether by their lives and actions they were co-operating with God, or opposing Him. But there are others who have so closely identified themselves with God's purpose, who enter into it with such a thoroughness of heart, that it is the great centre to which every line of thought, of feeling, of intention, and of sympathy converges. The purpose of God they adopt as the supreme business of life, so that their aims, intentions and labours are God's; they are co-workers with God, or, in other words, God is working to secure his purpose with them and by them. Of such it may be said they have entered the secret place of God. They live the very life of God. Their impulses are identified with the impulses of God, their sympathies with the sympathies of God, their works with the works of God, their achievements and triumphs with the achievements and triumphs of God. "They dwell in the secret place of the most High."

Secondly: The attitude. "He that dwelleth." We need not detain you here. To dwell means a fixed, settled, habitual mode of life. It must be so with our conduct in reference to God's word, God's friendship, God's love, and God's purpose. We must dwell in them, live in them, abide in them. We must ask for no holiday, no leave of absence, there must be no departure. But this we shall neither wish nor desire. Of God's word we shall say, "Oh, how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day!" Communion with God will be the richest, sweetest exercise of our souls. His love will be the source of our purest enjoyments, and His purpose the one business of life.

Thirdly: How attained. How can we reach and take up our abode in this the very heart of God? Christ supplies the answer, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Let us look, then, at the four particulars in the light of this gospel principle.

(1.) It is through Christ that we reach and dwell in the secret place of God's word. Christ is the key to that word. Christ in the glory of his person—the depth of his humiliation—the agony of his sufferings—the sacrifice of his life, accomplishing the purpose of the Father, in the destructio

of sin and the redemption of our race. Read in this light, contemplated in this mirror, examined by this key, and you read and comprehend God's truth in God's light. The Spirit of God, by whose agency and teaching God's word was written, is the spirit of Christ, catching the spirit of Christ; God's book is a revelation, not a mystery, a revelation that conducts you straight to the heart of God. (2.) It is through Christ that we reach and dwell in the secret place of God's communion. Christ, Christ's mediation, Christ's word, Christ's spirit is "the new and living way." There are some things upon which there can be no communion between God and our spirits. They are far up and above all finite comprehension; they must for ever remain hidden in the depths of the Divine mind. But the things of Christ are common to God and us; we can talk about them, we have a common interest in them-it is by them that we have been brought together. They are a common ground upon which we can meet, "the mercy seat" where God can commune with us, the medium through which God can bless us, and through which we can receive and enjoy God's blessing. "The things of Christ," the thoughts and teachings, the temptations, the actions, the sufferings, and the death of Christ, are all subjects upon which there can be the closest and the most engrossing communion with God, upon which our thoughts can mingle with God's thoughts, in which our feelings can commingle with God's feelings. In Christ God and we are one. (3.) It is through Christ that we reach and dwell in the secret place of God's love. In the life and character of Christ, God the Father is revealed to us. We see that the love and regard and care and sympathy which the earthly parent fosters and displays are the rays, the throbbings, the breathings of the great Heavenly Parent. That the highest, noblest, the greatest thing we are ready to do for our children is but a dim reflection, a faint resemblance of what the Heavenly Father is ready to do for us. In the prompting motive, the sustaining power, and the ultimate design of Christ's earthly life of humiliation, suffering, temptation,

and sorrow, and which culminated in a death of shame, of obloquy, and of anguish, we are drawn into the full-orbed splendour of God's love. We see love, eternal, unconquerable, sovereign love, devising the most extraordinary means (the incarnation of the Eternal Son), sustaining the most amazing sacrifice (the most cruel and ignominious death of that Son), and employing the most potent energy (the influence of his Spirit) to save and to redeem guilty and rebel It is here that "God commendeth his love toward us." 4 Christ, the life of Christ, but especially the death of Christ, is the heart of God laid open, that in it we may almost hear the unutterable throbbings of his love, and almost feel the rush of its mighty pulsations of mercy." It is in Christ that we get at the secret of God's love. (4.) It is in Christ that we reach and dwell in the secret place of God's purpose. The redemption of men from the curse and power of sin by the bloodshedding of the cross-"the bringing of many sons unto glory," by that perfect obedience which braved death rather than yield, is the grand solution of God's providential government over our world. Dark and mysterious as it appears when viewed alone, when viewed in the light of that great design, it becomes luminous and clear. In its consummation every event will be absorbed; every circumstance will find its goal, and every act its end. Christ-the triumph of Christ-the exaltation of Christ-the eternal glorification of Christ with his people, is the one grand ultimate purpose of God. The salvation of souls, the cleansing, purifying, elevating of souls from the guilt, the defilement, the pollution, and the death of sin, is the design upon which God's heart has been set from all eternity, the one object towards which everything has been directed, which He has done. When, then, we comprehend the grand meaning of the cross, and so enter into the work and the ministry of Christ as to become partakers of his thoughts and sufferings, we reach and dwell in the secret place of God's purpose.

II. THE BLESSING ENJOYED. "Shall abide under the

shadow of the Almighty." What intelligible and practical meaning can we attach to these words that will be of service to us in the conflict and labour of life? We shall illustrate the line of thought already pursued. We conceive these words to mean that he that attains to the position indicated shall enjoy God's special protection, security, and serenity.

First: We have indicated what it is to dwell in the secret place of God's word. In that position we get our minds furnished and filled with God's thoughts about things-God's ideas concerning things—God's principles relating to things. With minds thus furnished and filled we are under their protection. The world's thoughts, and ideas, and principles of things may assail us, but they cannot do much with us; we know better; we have received a higher education, our minds are fortified with God's thoughts, guarded with God's ideas, protected with God's principles. As we have said, we look at things from the same point of view as God. We have the secret of God, and that will enable us quickly to detect the fallacy, the error, and the evil that lie concealed in that which the world presents. The man of science is not to be imposed upon by the tricks, legerdemain, and deception that the thoughtless multitude gaze at, and receive with amazement and simple credulity. He is under the protection and shadow of science. His knowledge of scientific laws enables him to detect at once the imposition and fraud. So with the, man that dwells in the secret place of God's word; he abides under its shadow and protection. And the higher and superior and truer views of things which that word gives him enable him to detect and to refuse the juggleries and deceptions and frauds that are leading the multitude down the road to destruction and perdition. The words of God, the thoughts of God, keep out, repulse, and drive back the thoughts of the world and the falsehoods of sin.

Secondly: We have indicated what it is to dwell in the secret place of God's communion. In that position we get our whole nature fired and animated with holy and heavenly impulses, sympathies, tastes, and dispositions. We get our

whole nature magnetised with the nature of God. With our whole nature thus infused, fired, animated, and magnetised with the very impulses and inspirations of God's nature, we are under their protection. We are lifted into a higher sphere of life. The man of cultivated taste and mind can never be allured or imposed upon by the coarse, rude, sensual enjoyments and pleasures of the country clown. He is protected, and under the shadow of the higher and superior tastes, sensibilities, and influences of education. So with the man that dwells in the secret place of God's communion; he is under the protection and shadow of God's presence and friendship, fortified and guarded with the very nature of God.

Thirdly: We have indicated what it is to dwell in the secret place of God's love. In that position we get our best, strongest, and supreme affections impregnated and energised with the love of God. We live under its shadow and protection. By its high and holy and potent influence we are preserved from the love of low, base, temporal, inferior things. God holds our heart, and like a garrison fortified with soldiers, so it is protected and defended because filled with the love of God. The love of God is a force superior far, mightier far, than any the world can ever command or muster. Against the heart protected and defended by the love of God, therefore, the love of the world can make no advance.

Fourthly: We have indicated what it is to dwell in the secret place of God's purpose. In that position our energies, our sympathies, our interests, our intentions, and our pursuits are all enlisted and engaged in co-operating with God in bringing about the desire of his heart and the great pleasure of his will. In our labours and toils, our efforts and struggles to destroy sin and to establish holiness, whether it be in our own hearts, in the lives and conduct of our children, or in the spirit and practice of the world, we are under the protection and shadow of the most High, because we are identified with God's purpose. The same protection, there-

fore, which God extends over it He must extend over us. To assail us is to assail that which has the mighty energies of God engaged and employed for its protection and defence.

We see, then, that the security and protection of him that dwells in the secret place of the most High is no arbitrary, contingent, uncertain sort of thing. It has all the certainty of fixed, positive, unfailing law. Let this, then, be our aim, our prayer, our one desire, to get into the secret of God—the secret of God's word—God's friendship—God's love and God's purpose, so as to get our minds filled with God's thoughts—our spirits animated with God's disposition, our hearts possessed with God's affections, and our souls filled with God's aims and God's purposes, and nothing can harm us. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, which we shall then have. Our minds will be "kept in perfect peace, because stayed on God." The Lord will be the strength of our life.

Poplar.

BENJAMIN PREBOR.

Subject: The Supernatural Unfolding, and Man under Delusion.

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear."—Matt. xiv. 26.

Analysis of Jomily the Seben Jundred und Forty-Sighth.

I. THE ALLEGED MIRACLE.

First: Look at its reality. And perhaps we shall best see this by considering what can be said against it. (1.) Some would have us believe that the whole thing is a conscious and deliberate fabrication. But, First—There is no conceivable motive to induce such an invention. The disciples knew that to magnify Jesus was to rouse against themselves either scorn or vengeance. Secondly—The character of the men is against the imputation. Whatever they were during the lifetime of Jesus, after the resurrection there was not one

of them that betrayed a spirit so mean and base as the sup-Thirdly-There are none of the marks of position involves. fabrication in the narrative. You cannot help feeling that the man believed what he wrote, whether others believe it or not. (2.) Some would have us believe that the incident grew out of the disposition of the disciples to see their Lord a wonder-worker. But just the reverse was the case. On this occasion they never thought of Jesus coming to them. and when He did come they thought it was a spirit. If it is said that they were afterwards changed, let me ask, what can so well account for the change as the reality of the miracles? (3.) Some would have us believe that we owe the miraculous part of the incident to the time that elapsed before the circumstance was recorded. But if anything in their lives was likely to be well remembered by the disciples, and accurately related, was it not that night on the sea when every moment they expected would be their last? There is internal evidence that there was no confusion in the writer's mind. He sees the scene distinctly, and all the detail of it. Secondly: Look at its greatness. You cannot allow the miracle without the confession that Jesus was more than man.

II. THE SUPPOSED APPARITION.

First: An acknowledgment of the existence of a spiritworld is here made, and the belief of the race in it is suggested.

- (1.) All the faiths of the world suggest it. Of all the religions of the past and the present, there is not one that does not assume a spirit-world.
- (2.) The greatest poets of the nations suggest it. Read Homer, Virgil, Dante, Goethe, Shakespeare, &c., and a spiritworld is hovering around you at once. Even some of the greatest sceptics have been unable to write poetry without bringing spirits upon the scene.
- (3.) The superstitions of peoples suggest it. See how the consciousness of a spirit-world came out in the Hebrew. So

rank was the practice of raising the dead, &c., that a law was passed to put it down. Both Greece and Rome were overrun with sorcerers, and the people accepted them, just, because they accepted a spirit-world. Travellers and missionaries have stories to tell of the superstitions of the people in relation to spirits in all parts of the earth. Not long ago, in the most enlightened nations in this world, people laid their hands upon a table and forthwith believed that spirits were hovering around them, and waiting to tell them both the age that their grandmother attained and the hour of her decease, and suchlike wonders. More recently, people went in their carriages and paid their guineas to hear spirits play the banjo, &c. But does all that outrage reason more than the philosophy that smiles at the belief in the existence of a spirit-world?

(4.) Personal experiences suggest it. You can all imagine yourselves in circumstances where you could not help feeling the presence of a spirit-world. You are a greater coward than you think. It is easy to laugh at ghost stories, &c., at the fireside. Suppose yourself alone at midnight in an old castle, in the depth of a gloomy forest, as you hearkened to the strange unearthly noises and explored the gloomy vaults from which they came, and thought of the ghastly work that had been wrought in the dungeons, &c., you would be more than flesh and blood if you did not assume the existence of a spirit-world.

Secondly: We are here reminded that there is usually fear in the supposed presence of spirits. The disciples "were troubled." But why should there be fear? (1.) It will not do to say that it is because a disembodied spirit is a mystery; for mystery is oft attractive. (2.) It will not do to say that fellowship with the spirit-world is unnatural. Nothing ought surely to be more natural. (3.) It will not do to say that the fear arises altogether from a misconception of the relation we sustain to the spirit-world. That accounts for it in part only. True, it is a misconception about an eclipse of the sun, a comet, &c., that fills men with terror

on first beholding. But why, under such circumstances, do men fancy that wrath is meant towards them? Just because there is a sense of guilt; and that explains fear in connection with the spirit-world.

III. THE UNRECOGNISED SAVIOUR.

It was Jesus whom they took to be a spirit. How often we make the same mistake!

First: What is chastisement? We take it for the spirit of retribution, &c. And how distressful is the thought! Brethren, it is Jesus coming on the wild waves to save us from an awful danger. For "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," &c.

Secondly: What is Death? We think sometimes that it is a hard relentless spirit that comes to tear us from all we love; sometimes that it is a spirit of destruction that comes to annihilate. How awful are such thoughts? Brethren, it is Jesus coming to save us from sin and sorrow, &c. What means this, "Watch and pray, for in such an hour," &c.; and this, "I will come again, and receive you," &c.; and this, "Behold, I have the keys of Hades and Death," &c.

Preston.

H. J. MARTYN.

Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. II.)

Subject: Bible Nurses.

HRISTIANITY has suffered much more from the kisses than from the blows of its enemies; but, most of all, has it suffered from the timid or injudicious and overweening kindness of its friends. The Bible is well able to go without crutches, and yet how many simple Christians are never satisfied unless they can prop it up without reference to the soundness of their facts or the reasonableness and con-

sistency of their conclusions. Not only is our authorized English version received, as we say commercially, "with all faults," by a large portion of its readers, but with all the hereditary and educational prejudices of our childhood. Even the advanced author of one of the notorious "Essays and Reviews" has gone with the stream in assuming that the tower of Babel was built to enable our forefathers to get beyond the reach of a second deluge. We do not instance this because we believe the motive to have been a friendly one towards Inspiration, but simply to show how deeply-seated is the bias towards these traditionary riders on the Bible-text.

To give another illustration. Every old-fashioned reader of the Bible, as a matter of course, takes the field on behalf of the Unicorn-mane, tail, tassel, collar, gold chain, and all--just as he is traditionally represented in the royal arms: though, so lately as old John Lydgate's time, that creature was described as an "antelope." And why? Simply because it is supposed—and only supposed—that the Scriptures describe such an animal; and, therefore, with a love as tender as that which a mother feels for her idiot or illformed offspring do these Bible-nurses watch over its very mistranslations and glosses, lest the sacred text, which is altogether guiltless, should suffer from the unbelieving raillery of its foes. Thus Swan, in his "Speculum Mundi,"-a work now out of date, but formerly a text-book at Cambridge-contends not only for the existence of this onehorned anomaly, but tells us, moreover, that the horn is a "very rich one"—"excellent and of surpassing power," and possesses the singular virtue of expelling poison from the water which the creature is about to drink. We have even in our own day many authors who go softly in the wake of these ancestral prejudices, telling us virtually to beware of facts lest they should cross the creed of our babyhood, and compel our belief before it has been scrutinized through our grandmother's spectacles. "A solemn prayerful study of geology," says a writer of this school, "cannot be wrong: but great watchfulness and caution are required." Let us improve the hint. A glance at the midnight heavens cannot be wrong, provided you see there no heterodox planet—no infidel group of stars.

To return, however. To stake the credibility of the Bible on the orthodoxy of the unicorn would be not only dan-

gerous but perfectly gratuitous. Let the careful reader consult every text in which the animal is mentioned, and rejecting the *italics* of our version, he will find that none of them refer to a beast with only one horn. True it is, that in our Latin and Greek translations (which are no more inspired than the English) a creature, popularly called by a name signifying "one-horn," is referred to; but the name may have been given with as little reason as that which in the present day designates a poor beetle a "death-watch," an unoffending bird the "goat-sucker," or the "water-wagtail bold," a "dish-washer."

Men, otherwise truly great and fully abreast of the age, too often share this weakness, and fall into the error of over-carefulness for God's truth. Dipping into Dr. Raleigh's discursive homilies on Jonah, we were surprised to find a mind like his gratefully accepting, with reference to the "great fish," such evidence as that of the huge fossil teeth found in the Mediterranean. "If," says he, "God could speak to the fish, we can thank it, and turn our thanks into the form of kindness to all creatures. The creature is dead and gone. Perhaps some of its teeth may be among those fossil teeth which have been found in great numbers on the shores of Malta and Sicily, and which are allowed by naturalists to belong to a larger race of fishes than the existing ones!"

We should hardly have expected so retrograde an allusion in the present day. Old John Ray, in his "Dissolution of the World," might press these glossopetræ into his service two centuries ago as proofs of the Deluge, but the reference seems unworthy of the advanced philosophy of the day, especially as no petrified or fossilized remains belong to a period so recent, by many ages, as that of the prophet of Nineveh; or could be referred to any existences of the post-diluvian, or even the post-Adamite period. The allusion is therefore injudicious, as betraying an uneasy hankering after a "larger race of fishes than the existing ones," and thus laying open a weak side to the adversary. Palæontology had no more to do with Jonah's time than blue-skinned Britons and Druidic rites have to do with ours; and what a fearful leverage it gives the sceptie, to plead in apology for a Scripture fact, a conjecture that falls to pieces when looked at from a geological stand-point.

But this, by the way only. We might refer to many books, which, written with the best intention, seem to us very

likely seriously to compromise the originality or dignity of Scripture truth. Let us select as a type, "Stones Crying Out"—an appeal to the written rocks of Sinai, in confirmation of the story of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness. This work is an "improvement," in the pulpit-sense, of the facts and deductions very modestly and fairly stated in the Rev. Charles Forster's "One Primeval Language." The variety of opinions entertained by men of great learning and research as to the antiquity and value of these inscriptions, would, of itself, be almost sufficient to render any reference to them, as authorities, undesirable, as we are not likely to settle a question of fact by showing how widely dissentient are the opinions of the best informed upon the subject. Our work proceeds upon the basis that these "written rocks" were engraved by, or bear a cotemporary reference to, the Israelites during their long wanderings in the wilderness. But to this theory there are so many and such grave objections, that it seems most unsafe to base on it any conclusions that may jeopardize the credibility of the inspired record, by shifting the onus of proof to memorials of such doubtful origin and antiquity.

Our objections to this interpretation of the "written rocks" are so many and so grave, that we cannot but think those who adopt it are doing ill service to the cause of Revelation, which has not only no need of such helps, but is far better

without them. They are briefly these-

First: We only know them to be as old as the sixth

century of the Christian era.

Second: Though some of the *characters* have a faint resemblance to the Hebrew, the *language* is almost uniformly Arabic.

Third: The type and key of these characters are found in the famous Rosetta stone, which dates twelve centuries later than the period at which it is assumed that they were written.

Fourth: A still more serious objection to this hypothesis is suggested by the tenor of the inscriptions themselves. Is it at all likely that the wandering Israelites would thus record their own shame with "an iron pen in the rock for ever," and describe themselves as "kicking," "reviling," "slothful," "muttering," "biting," "railing," "cursing," "vociferous rebels," according to Mr. Forster's interpretation.

Fifth: And as certainly would their pious leader, and his

associates in office, have recoiled with horror from the idea of scrawling carelessly, again and again, upon the face of the savage rock, the ineffable, incommunicable name of Jehovah, so frequently occurring, according to the reading approved of by our Bible-nurses.

This last difficulty seems absolutely insurmountable; but whether we have made out our case or not, we trust enough has been said to show the expediency of letting well alone and allowing the Bible to take care of itself.

Biblical Criticism.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .- EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chapter xx. 1.—And after the uproar was over, Paul, having called to [him] the disciples and taken leave [of them] went out to go in Macedonia.

- 2. And having gone through those parts, and exhorted them with much speech, he came into Hellad.
- 3. And when he had been there three months, a plot of the Jews coming up against him as he was about to set sail into Syria, he thought it best to return through Macedonia.
- 4. And there followed with him as far as Asia, Sopater, son of Pyrrhus, a Berean, and of Thessalonians, Aristarchus, and Secundus; and Gaius, a Derbean, and Timothy, and the Asiatics, Tychicus, and Trophimus.
 - 5. These going before, awaited us in Troad.
- 6. And we sailed away from Philippi, after the days of the unleavened, and came to them into Troad within five days, where we tarried for seven days.
- 7. And on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul reasoned with them, about to depart on the morrow, and extended the speech until midnight.
- 8. And there were many lamps in the upper-chamber where we were assembled.

- 9. And a certain youth by name Eutychus, sitting upon the window, being borne down in a deep sleep, Paul reasoning long while, having been borne down by the sleep, fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead.
- 10. But Paul going down fell upon him, and embracing [him] said, Make no wail, for his soul is in him.
- 11. And having gone up again and broke and tasted the bread, and harangued much until dawn, thus he went out.
- 12. And they brought the boy alive, and were comforted not a little.
- 13. And we (emphatic) going before to the ship, set sail for Assos, thence being about to take up Paul, for so he had ordered, being about himself to foot it.
- 14. And when he fell in with us at Assos, taking him up, we came to Mitylene.
- 15. And having sailed from thence, on the following day we came down over against Chios; and the other day we reuched Samos; and having abode at Trogyllium, the next [day] we came to Miletus.
- 16. For Paul had judged to sail by (that is, to pass) Ephesus, that it might not happen to him to spend time in Asia; for he hasted, if it were possible for him, at the day of Pentecost, to come to Jerusalem.
- 17. But from Miletus sending to Ephesus, he called for the elders of the Church.
- 18. And when they were come beside him, he said to them, Ye (emphatic) understand from the first day that I came into Asia, in what way I was with you all the time.
- 19. Serving the Lord with all lowlimindedness, and tears, and temptations, which befel me through the plots of the Jews:
- 20. How I did keep back nothing of what was useful, so as not to announce to you, and to teach you in public, and in houses,
- 21. Earnestly witnessing both to Jews and Hellenes the repentance toward God, and the faith toward our Lord Jesus.

- 22. And now behold I (emphatic), bound in the spirit, am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what shall meet me there.
- 23. Except that the Holy Ghost earnestly witnesseth city by city, saying that bonds and tribulations are awaiting me.
- 24. But I make account of nothing, neither hold my soul so precious to myself, as the perfecting of my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, earnestly to witness the Gospel of the grace of God.
- 25. And now behold I (emphatic) know that ye shall see my face no more, all among whom I went about preaching the kingdom.
- 26. Wherefore I protest to you this day, that I (emphatic) [am] pure from the blood of all.
- 27. For I did not keep back from announcing to you all the counsel of God.
- 28. Take heed then to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Ghost has set you [as] overseers, to shepherd the Church of the Lord which He gained with his own blood.
- 29. For I (emphatic) know this, that there shall come after my departure fierce wolves in upon you, not sparing the flock.
- 30. And of yourselves shall arise men [avooes] speaking perverse [things] to draw away the disciples after them.
- 31. Wherefore watch, remembering that three years, night and day, I ceased not with tears admonishing every one.
- 32. And for the present I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, able to build [you] up and to give an inheritance among all the sanctified.
 - 33. No one's silver or gold or clothing I desired.
- 34. Yourselves know that to my needs, and to them that were with me, these hands ministered all.
- 35. I gave you to understand that thus toiling it behoves to take part with the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, It is blessed to give rather than to take.

- 36. And having said these things, bending his knees, he prayed with all of them.
- 37. And much weeping was done by all; and falling on the neck of Paul, they kissed him;
- 38. Sorrowing most for the word which he had said, that no more should they his face behold. And they accompanied him to the ship.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

NATURE SERVING CHRISTIANITY.

"And the earth helped the woman."—Rev. xii. 16.

By common consent "the Woman" here means redeemed humanity, or the children of God collectively; in other words, what is called, the Church. Without attempting anv minute interpretation of this highly figurative chapter, one thing is clear, that this "woman"—redeemed humanity is the great wonder of human history. (1) Her appearance and position are "wonderful." "Clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, upon her head the twelve stars." (2) Her progeny is "wonderful." "And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." Christ is at once, paradoxical as it may seem, the parent and the child of redeemed humanity, "he was born of the

seed of David," &c. (3) Her antagonist is "wonderful." "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his The devil is the great enemy of redeemed humanity, and the description here given of him indicates that he is a being of stupendous force and malice. (4) Her influence is "wonderful." Supernatural beings engage in fierce conflict on her account. There was war in heaven. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon," &c.

But we must come to the text, the subject of which I shall take to be nature serving Christianity. "The earth"—nature—"helped the woman"—embodied Christianity. Nature helps Christianity in various ways.

I. BY ITS GRAND REVELA-TIONS. Nature reveals all the grand subjects that constitute the very foundation of bible discoveries. First: There is God. All nature proclaims not only his existence, but his personality, unity, spiritugoodness. wisdom, ality, power. Secondly: There is law. Every part is under the rigorous reign of law. Any infraction of nature's laws carries penalties. Thirdly: There is mediation. The principle of mediation runs through all nature. element, one agent, one being everywhere serving another. Fourthly: There is responsibility. In the human world men are everywhere recognised as responsible; men everywhere feel their responsibility. Fifthly: There is mystery.There is a haze of mystery over all nature. Every part has arcanas, which no intellect can penetrate. The whole universe seems to float on the dark sea of mystery.

Now, all these subjects which we find in nature we find also in the Bible. Hence nature comes to illustrate the meaning of the Bible, and confirm its truth. It is a grand Parable. Hence the earth helps the woman.

Nature helps Christianity, IL By ITS MORAL IMPRES-SIONS. Nature is suited to

make impressions upon the heart corresponding exactly with those which Christianity essays to produce. First: Sense of dependence. How infinitely little man feels beside the great hills, confronting the ocean billow, and under the awful stars. Amidst the majesty of nature's appearances, he feels himself to be nothing, and less than nothing. He feels borne along as a straw upon the resistless flood of destiny. Secondly: Reverence. How great does God appear in nature, in the minute as well as the vast. An undevout astronomer is mad: there is a spirit in nature that seems to say to every thoughtful soul, "Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place on which thou standest is holy ground." Thirdly: Contri-The streams of divine tion. goodness seem to well up from every blade, flow down in every ray, beat in every wave of air, and are vocal with reproof to guilty man for his ingratitude and disobedience towards his Maker. Fourthly: Worship. In reason's ear a thousand voices speak to man: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, sing forth the honour of his name, make his praise glorious."

Now these are just the impressions that the Gospel aims to produce. And thus

nature serves Christianity by endeavouring to produce the same spiritual results; and in this way again the earth helps the woman. Nature serves Christianity.

III. BY ITS MULTIPLIED IN-VENTIONS. Men, by studying nature, and employing its laws, elements, and forces, for their intellectual and temporal uses, have attained those arts which are highly conducive to the advancement of Christianity.

First: There is merchandise. Trade brings the remotest nations together in a common interest. The means for exporting commodities are available for exporting the Word of God.

Secondly: There is the press. The press is an invention of nature; and an invention which is admirably suited to advance Christianity. It has already borne the Gospel to the most distant parts of the earth.

Thirdly: There is painting. The art by which man transfers the forms of nature, and embodies his own conceptions of beauty on the canvas. By this noble art the scenes and characters of the Bible, and even our blessed Lord himself, are brought with a vivid reality under the notice of men.

Fourthly: There is music.

The magic art which catches

the floating sounds of nature, and weaves them into strains of melody that stir the deepest feelings of the soul. Never does truth come with such strange majesty to the heart as when it comes floating on the wave of melody.

Fifthly: There is government. Government is of the earth, earthly, but it helps Christianity. The Roman Government in the first ages did it good service, and all civil governments that keep to their true province, serve itnow.

THE HOPE OF THE GOOD IN SORROW.

"My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say more than . they that watch for the morning." —Psa. cxxx. 6.

THE writer of this Psalm was in some great sorrow. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Thus he begins: "Deep waters are symbols of great sorrows. Save me, O God, for the waters have come in unto my soul." Again, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." Figurative language this, powerfully expressing the condition of a soul overwhelmed in sorrow. Though we know not either the precise nature or cause of his great sorrow, it is interesting to know that amidst the rushing and the roaring of the billows his anchor of hope held on—"My soul waiteth for the Lord."

L THE OBJECT OF HIS HOPE IN HIS SORROW—"I wait for the Lord." This implies two things—First: A belief that the Lord would appear for him. He had no doubt of his Lord manifesting Himself in time. He seemed as if He was hidden from him now. clouds of his sorrow concealed him, as the mists of the earth conceal the sun, but he knew that He would come, and he waited. It implied-Secondly: A belief that at his appearance he should have relief. He would not wait if he felt there would come no deliverance, still less if he felt that his sorrows would be aggravated by the event. God will come to deliver his people out of their sorrows. Job said, in the midst of his anguish, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c.

II. THE GROUND OF HIS HOPE IN HIS SORROW. On what was his hope grounded? In his word. "In his word do I hope." First: His word promises deliverance to the good insorrow. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee. In a little wrath hid I my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I

have mercy upon Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Secondly: His mord infallibly isWhat He has promised must The strength be fulfilled. of Israel will not lie nor repent, for He is not a man He that should repent. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c.

III. THE EARNESTNESS OF HIS HOPE IN HIS SORROW. His hope is an earnest thing. "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. I say more than they that watch for the morning."

This earnestness implies— First: The intensity of his distress.His soul is in the midnight of sadness, and he looks with stronger solicitude for relief than they that watch for the morning. Some understand the reference here to mean the watchman of the temple, who waited for the first break of day that the morning sacrifice might be offered. Others understand the reference to mean the watchman of the city, whose term of trying labour expired when the morning broke. Both are but conjectures, for in a suffering world there are thousands every night who watch earnestly for the morn-The man tossed on the ing. bed of agony watches for

the morning; the prisoner in his cell watches for the morning, the mariner in the storm watches for the morning; the general who has to decide on the coming day the destiny of his campaign, watches for the morning. None, however, watch more anxiously for the morning than the soul in anguish watches for its God.

Secondly: The certainty of his deliverance. Unless he was certain that deliverance would come he would not wait anxiously for it. Waiting implies a belief in certainty. He was as certain that it would come as that the morning would come. However dark and long the night, the morning will dawn. The night always appears long to the sufferer; still the morning comes at last. The sun comes mounting the steeps of heaven, chasing the darkness away, brightening the landscape, and pouring gladness into the world. Even so deliverance will come to the good.

My tried brothers, it is night with thee, night in the tempest, dark waves are rolling over thy spirit. The sky is starless and the elements are tumultuous; still the great sun is travelling his majestic rounds. He will soon appear on the

horizon of thy being, dispel the darkness, still the tumult, and gladden the whole universe of thy being.

TRUST IN THE LORD, THE CON-DITION OF STABILITY AND SAFETY.

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever."

—Pss. cxxv. 1, 2.

Trusting is a necessity of human nature; men everywhere are trusting. trust in one thing and some in another. "Some trust in horses, some in chariots," &c. Trusting determines man's condition. He that trusts in the frail, the imperfect, the uncertain, the insufficient. dying, must be the constant anxiety, irritation, There is ONE. and distress. and only One true and sufficent object of human trust, and that is "the Lord."

I. TRUST IN THE LORD IS THE CONDITION OF MORAL STABILITY, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved," &c. How firmly stands mountain Zion; the storms of a thousand ages leave it unmoved. Its im-

movableness is here used as an emblem of the moral fixation of that soul that trusts in "the Lord."

First: Such a soul is firm in its love. The soul that has fixed its affections upon infinite goodness feels such perfect satisfaction and such mighty charms that nothing can tempt it away. It is rooted and grounded in love. It says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee," &c.

Secondly: Such a soul is firm in its faith. It believes not in mere propositions, but in the substance of all truth -God; and it cannot be tossed about with every wind of doctrine. Thirdly: Such a soul is firm in its purpose. Its purpose is to do the will of God Nothing will turn it from this; everything it subordinates to this. This is its firmness-its immovability -nothing can turn it from its course. It is steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. A God-trusting soul is no reed to be shaken by the windno cloud to be tossed by the tempest. Moses, Elijah. Daniel, John the Baptist, and Paul, are noble examples of this moral firmness. You could sooner move Mount Zion than move those men from their love, their faith, or their purpose.

II. TRUST IN THE LORD IS

THE CONDITION OF DIVINE SECURITY. "As the mountains are now about Jerusalem so the Lord is round about his people." Jerusalem was not only built upon mountains, and therefore firm, but surrounded by them, and therefore protected. "All around." savs Dr. Robinson in his "Biblical Researches in Palestine," "are higher hills: on the east, the Mount of Olives; on the south, the Hill of Evil Counsel, so called, rising directly from the Vale of Hinnom; on the west the ground rises gently to the borders of the great road; while on the north a bend of the ridge, connected with the Mount of Olives, bounds the prospect at the distance of more than a mile." Such, then, was the natural strength of Jerusalem. By the best judges she was considered impregnable; and the military opinion of Titus, when the Roman legions destroyed tower and temple, was her unconscious echo of the touching language of Jeremiah.

How often mountains protected nations! The free winds that sweep the summits, and thunder at the sides, seem to inspire the people with an invincible love of freedom. Tyrants have often been crushed with thun-

derbolts of those who dwelt amongst the fastnesses of rocky heights. And mountains, too, have often proved the asylums of freedom.

"Of old sat Freedom on the heights; The thunders breaking at her feet. Above her shook the starry lights; Beneath she hears the torrents meet."

But no mountains have guarded a people as God guards those who trust in him. The Eternal God is a refuge, and underneath are the "everlasting arms." He "is a fire round about" them, and their "glory in the midst" of them.

Let us trust in Him, then, that liveth for ever—trust in Him will make us calm in trial, invincible in duty, and safe amidst the rage of hell, the agonies of death, and the convulsions of the last day. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," &c.

CHRIST FORECASTING HIS DEATH AND DESTINY.

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he."—John viii. 28.

I. THIS LANGUAGE REVEALS SUBLIME HEROISM OF SOUL IN THE PROSPECT OF A TERRIBLE DEATH. "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man." The

"lifting up" here evidently refers to his crucifixion. another occasion the Saviour spoke of his death in a similar way-" If I be lifted up," &c. His death by crucifixion was, First: The culmination of human wickedness. Human wickedness could not reach a higher point than the putting to death the Son of God. Second: The culmination of human suffering. The crucifixion involved ignominy, insult, cruelty, torture. Yet how calmly Christ speaks of this terrible death. "He endured the cross, despising the shame."

II. THIS LANGUAGE PRESSES UNSHAKEN FAITH IN THE TRIUMPH OF HIS CAUSE. "Ye shall know that I am he." First: He was not discouraged by apparent failure. To the world, his life, ending in crucifixion, would appear a stupendous failure. To him. however, it was a success. His death was a seed falling. into the earth. Second: He did not despair of man's improvability. He believed that there would come a reaction in men's minds concerning Him; that when He was gone they would begin to think, recognise, and give Him credit for excellences which they could not see when He was among them. Thirdly: He was not doubtful of ultimate success.

He saw the day of Pentecost; saw the results of apostolic labours; witnessed the triumph of His truth through all subsequent ages; at last saw his character moulding the race to his own ideal.

III. THIS LANGUAGE IM-PLIES A PRINCIPLE OF CONDUCT COMMON IN ALL HISTORY. The principle is this: Goodness disregarded when living, and appreciated when gone. We see this principle sometimes in the family. Members of a family may live together for years, and through the infirmity tempers, the clashing of taste, and the collision of opinion, excellences may be entirely overlooked. the father, mother, dies. sister, and then brother. attributes of goodness come up the memory survivors that appeared before. We see it in the State. Public men devoted to the common good, and loyal to conscience, so clash with popular opinions and prejudices, that they are regarded with odium, and dengunced with bitternessthey die and then their virtues emerge and the social atmosphere with fragrance — Burke, Hume, amongst Cobden are the many illustrations of this. We see it in the Church. minister labours for years

amongst a people. He may be too thoughtful to be appreciated by the thoughtless; too honest to bow to current prejudices; so that, during his life, his labours pass unacknowledged and unrequited. He dies. His memoir is written; his discourses are printed; he has a moral epiphany. It was so with Arnold, of Rugby; and Robertson, of Brighton.

THE NATURAL AND SUPER-NATURAL.

"The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."—Judges vii. 20.

The context—We shall notice.

I. Some of the events in which we behold the cooperation of the natural and supernatural.

First: In Providence. God works in providence only what man cannot. Man does what he can—but God does all that is beyond natural power.

Secondly: In conversion.
All who would be saved must co-operate with the influence of the Divine Spirit. "Draw me." This is the work of God. "We will run after thee." This is the work of man.

Thirdly: In the sustenance of a religious life.

Fourthly: In the propagation of the Gospel. II. THAT THE CO-OPERA-NION OF THE NATURAL AND SU-PERNATURAL IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE SUCCESS.

First: This is the only way success might be expected.

Secondly: The only way in which success is possible.

Thirdly: The co-operation of the natural and supernatural makes success certain.

III. PRACTICAL LESSONS.

First: We should endeavour to form a true estimate of ourselves. We can do a little, but cannot do all.

Secondly: Learn to acknowledge the Lord in every success.

D. Lewis.

Scripture and Science.

(No. III.

Subject: Water.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—John iv. 14.

At some future period we may study more fully and generally the analogies of water: but, in this note I purpose to notice those which specially illustrate these words of Jesus. It is not necessary for us to suppose that the woman of Samaria, or the disciples of Jesus, or the philosophers of his time, could appreciate the beautiful shades of meaning which an extensive examination of Nature casts upon our Lord's words. It is pleasing, however, to know that all the analogies which modern researches have discovered between water and religion were known to Him who spoke of his blessed influence on men's hearts as that of water. We are not saying more than we are warranted to say, when we suppose that our Lord had in his mind all the analogies which may ever be discovered. Notice—

- I. THE BLESSINGS OF RELIGION IN THEIR PHYSICAL TYPE—"WATER." The flow of water is often spoken of as representing the spread of the Gospel (Isa. xxxv. 6, 7; xliii. 19, 20). The influence of water on vegetation is used to illustrate the power of religion on human life (Psa. i. 3; Jer. xvii. 8). The pleasant quietude of a pool of water represents the repose of soul which faith in God affords (Psa. xxiii. 2). The quiekening energy of water is a type of the vivifying power of, God's Spirit (Ezek. xxxvi. 25).
 - 1. As there can be no physical life where there is no water, so there can

be no moral life where there is no religion. Both vegetable and animal life are absolutely dependent upon water. The reeds by the flowing river, the algo in the sea, the snow-plant whose home is among the tiny crystals of the snowflake, the grey lichen on the rock whose brow is often beaten by tempest and scorched by the heat of the sun, as well as the clover in the meadow, the violet in the shade, and the oak and cedar in the forest—in fact all—live by water. The influence of this discovery on a heathen mind was strange. Thales, the sage of Miletus, found water in the sea which washed the skirts of Greece giving life to fish, porifers, and corals. He found water on the Parnassus, supplying the rustic poet with the inspiration of his song. Life and beauty followed in the track of water, and death and desolation reigned where water was not found. The Grecian sage was so surprised with this discovery that he came to the conclusion that water was God—was the origin of all things— $\hat{\eta}$ $d\rho\chi\hat{\eta}$.

But apart from the influence of water as solvent of the inorganic food of plants, and the organic nutriment of animals, and as the general conveyer of all building material to the living frame, the discoveries of the last few years have shown that water as an obstacle to terrestrial radiation saves our world daily from universal death. Warm objects cool sooner in dry than in damp air, because the heat rays are reflected back to the object by every drop of floating vapour in the latter. If all the moisture in the atmosphere were precipitated at the moment of sunset, the air, being free from vapour, would allow the heat absorbed by the earth during the day to fly off to space, and, before sunrise, the whole hemisphere would become so cold as to be fatal to every form of life. The sun, which set upon a world of life and beauty, would rise upon one mighty grave.

The idea of the illustration then is this,—that in every way, true life of soul depends upon those powers which reach the human heart from the life and death of Jesus.

- 2. As there can be no physical cleanliness without water, so there can be no moral purity apart from Christ. Notice—
- II. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL IN THEIR CONDITION OF PROFIT. "Whosoever drinketh of the Water." God's mercy is for all, and for all on condition, and for all on the same condition—personal appropriation, "Drinketh." Notice—

III. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL IN THE MEDIUM OF THEIR COMMUNICATION. "That I shall give him." Bearing in mind the simile used by our Lord to represent spiritual energies, we naturally inquire—who or what gives us water? remembering that, that which is, to us, the cause of water, is a type of Christ, the cause of spiritual life.

We are indebted to the sun for all water—all water fit for use.

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The sun lifts up the water from the sea in the form of vapour, and, by its unequal heat on different sections and divisions of the air, causes the vapour to descend in the form of rain and dew. All our rills and rivulets, lakes and rivers, owe their origin to this. The sun takes the impure compound of the sea, and, having passed it through its own laboratory in high heaven—the air—it gives it pure, and beautiful, and fit for use in the form of rain, &c. Our Lord is such to all the powers of the spirit's life. All its energies come from Him, and He can take all kinds of powers, and by passing them beneath his magic touch, make "all things work together for our good;" make all things help our salvation. Notice—

IV. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL IN THEIR PRACTICAL INFLUENCE, "Shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The leading idea of the figure is, that the man whose soul is full of sympathies with Christ, becomes a conductor of spiritual influence, and a generator of such vital energies in some form. As the mountain is to water, so is a heart full of Christian sympathies to spiritual energies. The water, in dew and rain, falls upon the mountain. Its flocks, forests, and other living beings, are refreshed. The land is made more fertile. The heath-flower is painted with greater delicacy. of beauty. The wings of butterflies, and the elytra of beetles, shine more brightly in the sunlight; the lambs skip with lighter feet, and the shepherd gives more spirit to his homely song. But this is not all. The hill absorbs the excess of moisture, the water percolates through the rock to inner caverns; and when the clouds give no rain; when the grassis tree of dew; when the heat is great, and the land is thirsty, then that glorious mountain pours forth, through its wounded side, in a stream like flowing silver the clear cool water it has treasured up from days of yore, to satisfy the wants of thirsty comers. Such is every child of God represented by our Lord in the text. He receives, and is blessed; hereceives, and blesses others. If a man, whose soul is full of Christian energies-not dogmas, forms, or creeds-but is full of the loving, holyliving sympathies of Jesus, comes to your home or neighbourhood, his refreshing and life-giving power must be felt; for as the water becomes a well in the mountain, and flows out as the life of many, so do-Christian energies become a well in the nature of their possessor; and its constant flow tends to the production of that state of repose in God which our Saviour mentions as everlasting life.

Is religion within us such a life-giving energy?
Preston. Evan Lewis, B.A., F.R.G.S., F.E.S.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. LXXXII.)

RETRIBUTIONS OF THE .LIP AND

"A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth; and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him."—Prov. xii. 14.

THE RETRIBUTIONS OF THE "A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth." The man here must of course be supposed to be a good man for he speaks good. Speech, to be good must be (1) Sincere. It must correspond exactly with what is in the mind, all other speech is hollow and hypocritical. It must be (2) Truthful. must correspond with the facts or realities to which it refers. Speech may be sincere and yet not truthful; it may correspond with what is in the mind, but what is in the mind may not correspond with the facts. It must be (3) Benevolent. It must be used for the purpose of usefulness, not to injure, delude, or pain. Now the speech of such a man will satisfy him with "good." If any man offend, not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. How will such (James iii. 13.) speech satisfy a man? In its action upon his own mind. There is a pleasure in the act of speaking a true thing, and there is a higher pleasure in the reflection of having done so.

"Speech is the light, the morning of the mind; It spreads the beautoous images abroad

It spreads the beautous images abroad Which else lie furled and shrouded in the soul." DRYDEN.

Secondly: In the effect he sees produced upon others. He will

see in the circle in which he moves, intelligence, goodness, spring up around as he speaks.

Thirdly: In the conscious approbation of God. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written for them," &c. (Malachi iii. 16, 17.)

II. THE RETRIBUTIONS "And the recom-THE LIFE. pense of the man's hand shall be rendered unto him." The hand here stands for the whole conduct of life. It means that man should receive the rewards of his works. And this is inevitable. First: From the law of causation. We are to-day the result of our conduct yesterday, and the cause of our conduct to-morrow, and thus ever must we reap the work of our hands. Secondly: From the law of conscience. The past works of our hands are not lost; memory brings them up to the conscience. And the conscience stings or smiles according to their charac-Thirdly: From the law of righteousness. There is justice in the universe; and justice will ever punish the wicked and reward the good. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap.'

(No. LXXXIII.)

THE OPINIATED AND THE DOCILE.

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."—Prov. xii. 15.

I. THE OPINIATED. He is a "fool," and his way is always "right in

his own eyes." He has such a high estimate of himself that he ignores the opinions of others, adopts his own notions, as the infallible criterion and rule. Such a man, Solomon says, is a "fool." Why? First: Because he deprives himself of the advantages of other men's intelligence. It is the law of Providence that men should learn by the intelligence which others have reached by observation, study, and experience. The past should be regarded as the schoolmaster of the present. But the conceited man shuts out all this light. He is too clever to learn. He is so inflated with his own opinions, that he cannot admit the opinions of others. Secondly: Because he exposes himself to the scorn of society. Vanity or conceit is the most contemptible of attributes, all men despising them in others. A vain man is a social offence.

II. THE DOCILE. "He that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." First: Because he enriches his mental resources. His ear is ever open to the voice of intelligence, and that voice drops priceless sentences of truth every hour. He consults books, men, and nature, and "he increaseth knowledge." Secondly: Because he increases his power of influence. Knowledge is power. The more intelligence a man has, the wider and higher his dominion over others; and "the man that hearkeneth unto the counsel of the wise" is constantly adding to his stock of knowledge. Thirdly: Because he increases his securities of safety. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Young men avoid as you would avoid a fiend the spirit and the manners of opiniators.

"There are a sort of men whose visages Do cream and mantle, like a standing pond:

And do a wilful stillness entertain, With purpose to be dressed in an opinion Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit; As who should say, I am Sir Oracle, And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!

. I do know of these, That therefore only are reputed wise For saying nothing."

SHAKESPEARE.

(No. LXXXIV.)

"A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame. He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness de-ceit. There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health. The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment. Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil; but to the counsellors of peace is joy. There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mis-chief. Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight. A prudent man concealeth knowledge; but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness." - Prov. xii. 16 -23.

Speech is again the subject of these verses. Thomas Carlyle has said many strong and striking things about speech and silence. But his finest atterance on the subject will scarcely bear comparison in pith, point, and profundity with those of Solomon. In these verses he draws a contrast between different kinds of speech.

I. HERE ARE THE RASH AND THE PRUDENT. "The fool's wrath is presently known." Anger fires the man's soul, thoughts are forged in flame, and he speaks them out at once. His wrath is presently known. "A fool uttereth all his mind."

Such rash speech as this is very foolish, because (1) Anger is scarcely worthy of speech. (2) Anger in rash speech may accomplish immense mischief. In contrast with this is the prudent man, "who covereth shame." An angry passion may blaze up in his nature, but he covereth it;

he does not speak it out, quenches

it by suppression.

II. HERE IS THE TRUE AND THE FALSE. "He that speaketh truth, showeth forth righteousness." What is it to speak "truth?" Not merely to speak our conceptions of truth, for our conceptions may be false. to speak those conceptions of truth that agree with the nature of things. Speaking such conceptions is a manifestation of righteousness. The words are radiations of right. "But a false The man who witness deceit." speaks falsehood, instead of showing forth righteousness, shows forth the dishonest "deceit." He cheats with his tongue.

III. HERE IS THE WOUNDING "There is AND THE HEALING. that speaketh like the piercings of a sword." There is a spiteful, malignant speech, that acts as a javelin, or a sword—it "pierces" —it is designed to wound—and it does wound. There are those in society, whose "teeth are spears and arrows, and whose tongues are sharp swords." (Ps. lxii. 4.) The Psalmist was frequently wounded by such speech. "As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me." (Ps. xxxii. 10.) How many there are who cannot speak a kind word: "the poison of asps is under their lips.' In contrast with this is the healing tongue. "The tongue of the wise is health." There is a speech that is calming, succouring, strengthening—a tonic to the heart.

IV. HERE IS THE PERMANENT AND THE TRANSIENT. "The lip of truth shall be established for ever." Truth is an imperishable thing. He that speaks it drops that into the world that will outlive all human institutions, and growthroughthe ages. It is the incorruptible seed, "that liveth and abideth for ever." In contrast with this is the transient: a lying

tongue "is but for a moment." Falsehood cannot live long, the laws of the universe are against it. It is a bubble that floats on the stream, but breaks with one puff of air, and is lost in the great current of being.

V. HERE IS THE MISCHIEVOUS AND THE PACIFIC. "Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil, but to the counsellors of peace is joy. There shall no evil happen to the just, but the wicked shall be filled with mischief." There is a speech that is mischievous; it comes from the heart of him who is unrighteous, and who imagines evil. It disturbs social peace, it generates strife, it creates wars. In contrast with this is the pacific to the counsellors of peace is joy. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

VI. HERE IS THE CONDEMNED AND THE APPROVED. The false are condemned. "Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord." God is a God of truth, and false-hood is an abomination unto Him. On the other hand, they that deal truly are "his delight."

A man of truth is a man of God. VII. HERE IS THE RECKLESS AND THE THOUGHTFUL. " A prudent man concealeth knowledge; but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness." The language does not mean that a prudent man never speaks out his knowledge, but that he is not hasty in speech. reflects and deliberates: whereas the fool speaks out everything at once that comes into his mind; all the absurd and filthy things of his heart. "The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." (Prov. xv. 2.) We are told that the prudent man should keep silence. "Let us be silent," says Emerson, "that we may hear the whisper of the gods."

(No. LXXXV.)

DILIGENCE AND DIGNITY. SLOTH-FULNESS AND SEVERITY.

"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute."—Prov. xli. 24.

EXPRESSIONS parallel to the text have already frequently occurred, and will occur again as we proceed; our notice, therefore, should be brief. Here is-

I. DILIGENCE AND DIGNITY. "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule." All men desire rule. and some kind of rule every man may obtain. Social, civil, and what are higher still-mental and Rule over men's spiritual. thoughts and hearts. Any of these dominions diligence can achieve. Diligence in study may get a knowledge that may sway an age. Diligence in business may obtain wealth that shall govern commerce. Diligence in goodness may achieve an excellence before which the soul of nations shall kneel. Here is—

II. SLOTHFULNESS AND SER-VILITY. "But the slothful shall be under tribute." An indolent man will never become royal in anything. He will be the mere tool of society, the mere servile attendant upon others. Men will use him, make him a rung in the ladder of their ascent. The slothful man neither gets knowledge, wealth, nor goodness. He never reaches an imperial altitude. He shall be under tribute. which he hath is ultimately taken from him; and he falls into the outer darkness of obscurity.

(No. LXXXVI.)

THE SADDINING AND THE SUCCOURING.

"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good maketh it glad."—Prov. xii. 25.

I. THE SADDENING IN LIFF.

"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop." There is a soulcrushing sadness here. Millions of hearts are "stooping" under There is. the weight of sorrow. First: Personal affliction "that maketh the heart stoop." Sufferings of the body, mind, conscience, estate.

Secondly: There is social affliction "that maketh the heart stoop." The unfaithfulness of friends, the malice of enemies, the bereavements of death-what a load of sorrow rests on human souls!

II. THE SUCCOURING IN LIFE. "A good word maketh it glad." First: What are "good words?" (1.) "Good words" must be true words. False words may be pleasant for a time, but ultimately they will increase the suffering by terminating in disappointment. Good words must be true, true to reason, conscience, character, God.. (2.) "Good words" must be kind words-words originating in a loving heart, and instinct with a loving spirit. (3.) "Good words" must be suitable words, suitable to the particular state of the sufferer—must be fitted exactly to his condition. Secondly: Where are good words? Where is the good word to be found that will make the "stooping heart glad?" The Gospel is that word. Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath appointed me to preach good tidings. to the meek; he hath sent me tobind up the broken-hearted, toproclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn." Here is a word about Providence, to make the man whoseheart stoops under the weight of worldly cares "glad." Here is a word about pardon to make theman whose heart stoops under the sense of guilt "glad." Here isa word about the resurrection to make the man whose heart stoops under the weight of bereavement "glad." Oh! here is a word to comfort us in all our tribulations, "that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. i. 4.)

U. R. T.

(No. LXXXVII)

THE EXCELLING OF PIETY.

"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them."—Prov. xii. 26.

I. THE RIGHTBOUS MAN EXCELS OTHERS IN HIS RESOURCES.
The word "excellent" here stands for abundance. The righteous is more abundant than his neighbour. He is richer, seldom in material wealth, but always in

spiritual and moral. First: He has richer themes for thought. Secondly: Nobler principles of action. Thirdly: Sublimer objects, of hope. Fourthly: Diviner motives of action. He is richer. He has an "inheritance incorruptible," &c.; he has God Himself for his portion.

II. THE RIGHTEOUS MAN EX-CELS IN HIS CONDUCT. "The way of the wicked seduceth him." This stands in contrast with the implied way of the righteous. The way of the wicked is illusory; he fancies it a beautiful, pleasant, safe way, while it leads to ruin. it cheats him. "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. xliv. 32.) But the way of the righteous may be hard and rough, but is, notwithstanding, safe; its end is everlasting life.

Literary Aotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end, Since none can compass more than they intend.

How to Study the New Testament: The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. By Henry Alford, D.D., Dean of Canterbury. Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate-hill. 1867. 2nd Edition. Few, if any, writers of the present age have rendered more valuable contributions in Biblical science than the author of this book, and few of his many books are more valuable than the one before us. In it the learned author brings into comparison those passages in the several Gospels which seem, more or less, to be contradictory to each other.

By a proper interpretation of each, and an explanation of the circumstances under which they were written, discrepancies are obviated, and a beautiful harmony is made manifest. The work also contains many important corrections of the text of the English version of the Scripture. It is a very unfortunate circumstance, that in some cases—and those not altogether unimportant—the authorized version of Holy Writ is not true to the original. Dean Alford, we are glad to find, is a strenuous advocate for a revision of the present version. He asks, "That as a nation, that as churches, are we making a right use of the Holy Gospels, or of the rest of God's Revealed Word, until the rest of these blemishes are removed?" We think, with him, that it is full time the work was attempted, and entertain the belief that there is in this age biblical scholarship and theological freedom quite equal to the task. We heartily recommend this volume.

Ante-Nicens Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers. Vols. I. and II. Edited by the Rev. Alexander Roberts, D.D., and James Donaldson, LL.D. Vol. I.—Apostolic Fathers. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38, Georgestreet.

For many obvious reasons the writings of the early Christians are invested with peculiar interest and importance. Hitherto they have been so buried in the ancient languages, that only a few even of the ministers of Christendom know much about them: - and the few who are acquainted with them are generally so elated with their superior attainments, as to treat with unmistakable disdain the ignorance of their less enlightened brethren. We have heard some of the less scholarly and more pedantic of these favoured ones express themselves. as if there were something so wonderful shut up in the writings of these ancients, that there could be no true appreciation of Christianity without an understanding of them. Messrs. Clark, the celebrated and enterprising publishers of Edinburgh, will strip these men of their glory, will take from under their feet all ground of vaunting, by putting the antiquated works into the hands of all Christians in the language which they can understand. They are putting into the hands of the people, the Epistles of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Barnabas, Polycarp, Diognetus,-the works of Justin Martyr, Tertian, Athenagoras, Theolipius, Hermias, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Julias Africanus, Hypolitus, Dionysius, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, Novatian, Victorinus, and others. In fact, they intend to include in this series every Christian writing and document produced before the Nicene Council, whether in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, or in any otherlanguage. The whole work will form about sixteen or eighteen

volumes, of a size similar to the publishers' FORMIGN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY, and will be issued at the remarkably low price of one guinea for four volumes. We heartily rejoice in this enterprise. It will give to all ministers an intellectual platform, hitherto occupied only by a few, and thus promote a spirit of ministerial equality. It will also put all in possession of those sources from which much of the historic evidence in favour of Christianity is derived. There are, we venture to hope, but few of the clergy of any denomination who will not strive to make themselves possessors of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, and thus bless themselves and encourage the publishers in this magnificent undertaking.

THE CLERGY AND THE PULPIT IN THEIR RELATIONS TO THE PROPLE. By M. L'Abbe Isidore Mullois, Chaplain to the Emperor Napoleon III., and Missionary Apostolic. Translated by George Percy Badger, late Chaplain in the Diocese of Bombay, author of "The Nestorians and their Rituals," &c., &c. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 65, Cornhill.

THE series of ideas set forth in this volume, we are told, is for the guidance of the clergy in their pastoral ministrations, especially in the pulpit. The author's object is to direct the attention of his brethren in the ministry to "the lower orders," whose anathy for religion he attributes to the estrangement which took place between the clergy and the nation at the period of the great Revolution-"Our age," he says, "is a great prodigal son, let us help it to repent, and return to the paternal home." As the people of England as well as France are indifferent to religion, and stand aloof from pulpit ministrations, many, though not all, of the suggestions contained in this treatise are worthy of the adoption of the clergy of England. The author thinks that the preacher who is to meet the exigencies of his age should not only have the ordinary clerical education, but should have that spirit of love that would vitally identify him with the sorrows and joys of the people. He should be deeply read in the science of the heart, capable of appreciating all the springs which set society in motion, and diverting them from those channels where they only serve to fertilise the soil of vice, to the fields where virtue grows. This book is valuable; it breathes a noble spirit. It records many striking incidents. It is fraught with excellent counsels, and it has many striking philosophical remarks and specimens of pulpit eloquence. It has much in it to challenge remark, but our space is too limited to attempt an encounter. We may recur to it again. The author's advice concerning the brevity of sermons is worth the notice of those prosy brothers under whose somnific influence congregations sleep. The length of a sermon, our author says, should be from five to ten minutes. * Believe me-and I speak from experience—the more you say the less will the hearers retain, the less you say the more they will profit; by dint of burdening their memory you will overwhelm it, just as a lamp is extinguished by feeding it with too much oil, and plants are choked by immoderate irrigation. When a sermon is too long, the end erases the middle from the memory, and the middle the beginning."

THE NATIONAL ENCYCLOPÆDIA. Volumes V. to VIII. inclusive.
London and Glasgow: Mackenzie.

In a recent number of the Homilist we directed attention to the many attractions and to the solid worth of this Encyclopædia. We especially noticed the ability and accuracy of its articles, the clearness of its illustrations and designs, and the wide range of subjects it included, as amongst its many claims to a hearty appreciation. We added our hope that the volumes which we then noticed would be followed by others as good. We have now the satisfaction of being able to say that our hope, which we knew to be well founded, has been entirely realized. The four volumes now before us, which commence with Cot, and include Met, are in every way worthy their predecessors. This is bestowing on them high praise, for it will be remembered that we indicated that they left nothing to be desired but the money wherewith to purchase them. Butler has said that "there is a kind of physiognomy in the titles of books no less than in the faces of men, by which a skilful observer will as well know what to expect from the one as from the other." The title of this Encyclopædia illustrates forcibly the truth of this remark. We can tell at once, and truly, what it is. It is veritably a "National Encyclopædia"—not only worthy of, but a credit to, the name. To say that a work is popular is not always to praise it, because the word has come to convey a meaning with which intellectual power is not necessarily associated. When, therefore, we say that this undertaking is essentially a popular one, we must be understood to use that term in the sense in which Coleridge used it when he defined it to refer to one "which adapted the results of studious meditation, or scientific research, to the capacity of the people." It is a dictionary of information, and in its circle it embraces every subject. It is arranged on the simple alphabetical principle, and we certainly prefer this to the more logical plan of the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana." Chiefly for this reason, that of all the methods which have been adopted, since Spensippus, the disciple of Plato, originated the first work of this genus, this is the plan which experience has proved to be better adapted than any other for quick and easy reference. An encyclopædia should combine learning, accuracy, and skill, with perspicuity of language, and an arrangement of its matter in a form which makes consultation easy, plain, and rapid. In these days of pressing engagements and new books, the last is of

more importance than might at first sight be supposed. Lamartine has somewhere said that the time is coming when the only book possible will be the newspaper. The poet mind, seeing the restless activity of the race, fancied it would not have the patience to pore over ponderous volumes. However that may be, it seems certain that a concise and cystematic arrangement of human knowledge in plain and popular form, is that which is insisted on, and will be more and more insisted on by the great bulk of the hurrying, overworked, and inquiring men of the day, who have not leisure, opportunity, or means, to consult learned authorities and recondite treatises, and to extract from their recesses the short and plain statements of facts they require. To all classes "The National Encyclopædia" will be truly valuable, and we again heartily recommend it, in the perfect confidence that it will disappoint no reasonable hope, and will more than satisfy every reasonable subscriber.

SERMONS. By John Kelly, Liverpool. London: John Snow and Co. 2, Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row.

HERE are fifteen sermons on important subjects, and they are logically thoughtful and stiffly Calvinistic. Those who look for originality of thought, streaks of imagination, gushings of sympathy that overflow all propositions, will not be pleased with this volume; but those, however,—and they are numerous—who like religious thinking kept within orthodox limits, and Scripture expounded by Calvinian light, and all expressed in good clear vigorous language, will appreciate these discourses.

THE ANCIENT PSALMS IN APPROPRIATE METRES. A strictly Literal Translation from the Hebrew, with Explanatory Notes. DALMAN HAPSTONE, M.A. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co. THE author of this work thinks that no amount of learning expended on the mere words of the Psalms will ever suffice to extract the true meaning. The key must be furnished by a knowledge of the circumstances in which they were penned. We very much agree with this. The Psalms, for the most part, are lyric poetry, and the very essence of this poetry consists not in sketching idealities, but in delineating living actualities. David wrote about existing men; and the author of this book says that he has endeavoured to trace out the parties who sat for the portraits while the pencil was in David's hand, and to make the Psalms as intelligible to the English reader as they were to the Psalmist's own contemporaries. The plan of the author is to give the circumstances under which each Psalm was written, and then present the Psalm itself in rhythmic verse, inserting in the margin words that seem more true to the original. We consider it the best book on the Psalms, and most heartily recommend it.

TREASURE BOOK OF DEVOTIONAL READING. Edited by BENJAMIN ORME, M.A. Alexander Strahan, Ludgate-hill.

This volume is made up of extracts from various religious authors, ancient and modern. It belongs to a class of works that most increase. The books of the world are so numerous now, and so rapidly multiplying, that it is impossible for any one to read a hundredth part. Extracts from the best of them are all that we can hope for, in order either to keep us in any measure acquainted with the growing world of authors, or to derive any value from their services. These extracts are purely religious, and of the Calvinian theology.

The Book of Psalms: being the Book of Psalms according to the Authorized Version. By William Henry Alexander. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster-row, E.C.

This is the work of an excellent man, a man who had been engaged in a large mercantile enterprise, but who at the same time was a Christian philanthropist, an accomplished scholar, and a devout biblical student. We regard this work as a valuable contribution to the cause to which it is rendered.

THE WORKS OF HENRY SMITH; including Sermons, Treatises, Prayers, and Poems. With Life of the Author by Thomas Fuller, B.D. Vol. II. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

Here is the second volume of a work we have already noticed: the work of one of the ablest preachers of the sixteenth century. This volume contains a large number of sermons. All are short, and some strikingly good.

A COMMENTARY ON THE WHOLE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By WILLIAM GOUGE, D.D.; with a Narrative of his Life and Deather Edinburgh: James Nichol.

This is the third volume of a work which we have noticed and recom₇₅ mended more than once. It concludes an exposition of the Hebrews, which is homiletic and remarkably suggestive.

THE CROSS THE CHRISTIAN'S GREATEST GLORY. By JOHN DUNION.
RINGWOOD. Printed by W. A. Wheatson.

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This is a good sermon, full of good thought, and charges with exciting force upon the most momentous of subjects, the Cross of Christ. It is sad to see a sermon of this kind so printed—in a wretched way, on wretched paper.



A HOMILY

A Going and a Coming; or, Angelic Companionship.

"Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him."—Matt. iv. 11.

HE prolonged and severe attack which the devil made upon Jesus in the wilderness was moral throughout; and we make this statement because it is highly important that we should note and remember the fact. The arch-enemy did not bring force to bear on the object of his cunning and malicious He did not so much as touch the person of Smiting him to the earth would have been no proper triumph, and would not have served to advance his cause a single inch. To all this Satan was keenly alive. The weapons with which he assailed the Son of Man were moral in their nature; and, as might have been expected, the weapons with which Jesus defended Himself were of the same character. By the exercise of his omnipotence Christ could easily have annihilated his adversary; but in that case the victory achieved would have been unspeakably less glorious than it It would simply have been an instance of power . VOL. XX.

crushing weakness. There are no victories comparable to victories on the moral arena. Physical and intellectual victories alike grow pale in their presence; and herein lies the peculiar excellence of the triumph of Jesus over the devil—that it was purely moral. The "prince of the devils" tested Him as a moral being with all the skill he could command; but Jesus took no undue advantage of his antagonist. He met him on his own ground, and signally and honourably vanquished him.

That the devil was anxious to lead Jesus into sin there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. The onset originated with himself; and in the efforts which he put forth to pierce Christ, and cause his fall, he was in dead earnest. neither side was the combat recorded in this chapter a mock one. An awful earnestness characterized both the combatants. We are impressed with the ardent desire which possessed Satan to seduce the Son of God from his allegiance to his Father, when we consider the time selected to put him to the proof. The craft of the wicked one is something wonderful. In some respects he is stupid; in other respects he is amazingly clever. The influence of the body upon the mind is universally acknowledged. Some bodily states are favourable to the resistance of temptation, and some are not Now what was Christ's bodily condition when the devil, with his accustomed artfulness, spread his nets before Him ? The pangs of hunger were on Him, inasmuch as He had not tasted food for forty days and forty nights previous to the encounter with the devil. He took Jesus when, so far as the body was concerned. He was at the weakest; and it is the more to the honor of Christ that, though unfortunately circumstanced when the tempter threw himself across his path, He dreve him from the field. We are further impressed with the anxiety of the devil to get Jesus to stain his holiness when we pass in review the temptations with which he plied Him It is not wise in us to underrate Satan's power as a tempest He has quite a genius for tempting intelligent creatures, and that genius has been developed by ages of practice. Men are

Etumsy tempters in comparison with him. As a tempter, he has neither equal nor superior. How admirably he adapted himself to mother Eve! She listened to him, and was ruined in consequence. Praise is due to all who successfully resist him, and a world of praise is due to Jesus for the manner in which He foiled him. Had we been sent to tempt Christ. could we have done it better? The more that we reflect on the temptations which were brought before Jesus, the more shall we be struck with their strength and subtlety. As if to render them the more powerful, he put a scriptural face on There was no grossness about them. For the occasion he transformed himself into an "angel of light;" and his doing so shows that his heart was set on deceiving "the man Christ Jesus," if he possibly could. But for once he was over-matched; Jesus completely baffled him. devil approached Him in a hopeful spirit, we may be sure that he left Him miserably crest-fallen. "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Min." We can imagine him half regretting that he had come to close quarters with Jesus. Those who are in the habit of winning can ill brook to lose a battle, and the greater the battle the more vexatious is defeat. We are not to suppose that when the devil left Jesus, he left Him for good and all. Lake tells us that he left Him "for a season." Satan has the virtue of perseverance; but the pity is that his, perseverance is perseverance in evil. He would, doubtless, return, and try Christ again and again. Toward the close of his diffe, Jesus made this remark to his disciples, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world bometh, and hath nothing in me." These words prove that the elevil kept his eye on Jesus, and never grew weary of assailing Him. As one who had mastered him, there would be a Asseination about Christ which the devil would have difficulty resisting. When the devil does not succeed, it is never for the want of trying. What mainly led to his departure, after heree distinct attempts to drag Jesus from his moral altitude. was probably the hearing of his name. In his third reply.

Christ intimated that He knew who it was that was tempting Him; and so soon as the devil perceived that he was seen through, he judged it good policy to retire for the present.

We are apt to conceive of the devil as omnipresent, but this is a manifest error. There is only one being of whom it can be affirmed that his centre is everywhere - God. The devil has a vast number of agents under him, and he may be able to transport himself from place to place with a velocity of which we can form no adequate conception. does not take the unfallen angels long to come from heaven to earth, and we should fancy that the fallen angels are as swift of wing as they; but however rapid may be his movements, we may be certain that the devil's presence is limited. If it be demanded—Where is Satan not? We answer—He is not in heaven. Long, long ago, he was expelled from it, and never more will he enter it. It is noteworthy that his encounter with Jesus in the lonely desert had a beginning to an end. When he saw that he was losing time, he left Christ -went in some other direction, and sought lower and easier prey. Creature as he is, the devil is, like ourselves, limited In his mischievous peregrinations, he comes and all round. goes as He may see fit.

There is no essential difference between the devil and ourselves, constitutionally viewed. His character may be worse, but his nature is much the same. We are liable to become discouraged in the use of means, and this is equally true of Satan. He is not unconquerable, and firm resistance causes him to lose heart, and flee. The discovery that, hungry though He was, Jesus was armed at all points, had a discouraging effect; and in this mood he naturally bethought him of flight. We cannot doubt but that he departed with reluctance. Still it was clear to him that there was not the slightest chance of success, and entertaining this idea, he suddenly withdrew. It may be that fear had to do with his . drawing off, for with all his boldness he is at bottom a coward. His fighting against God is no proof that God is not with him an object of dread. The apostle James assures us that

the "devils believe (that there is one God) and tremble;" and when he thus expressed bimself, he surely did not mean to exclude the "Prince of this world." There is such a thing as getting rid of the devil. By steadily resisting him we may so dishearten, and even frighten him, as to make him flee. He must either conquer or run. Jesus withstood him as the rock the dashing wave; and what happened? He retired from the contest with all possible speed. "Then the devil leaveth him." How differently Satan would have acted had Jesus yielded to his malign influence! He waxes bold in proportion as we yield to him. The leaving of Satan was complimentary to Christ. It showed that the devil felt himself beaten out and out. Had Jesus perceptibly given in had there been the smallest amount of wavering, or even a show of yielding, we may depend on it that Satan would have continued the combat. The least measure of success inspirits him, and leads him to play his best. He left because it was plain that, morally considered, Christ was on his guard and sound to the core. He had extracted the fiercest darts his well stocked quiver contained, and shot them as skilfully as he could, but all was to no purpose. He might as well have aimed them at the sun or the mountain's rocky brow. They fell short of the mark. They glanced off the moral armour in which Jesus stood encased, and dropt harmless at With the shield of faith held before Him, Christ . quenched them utterly, as the sea quenches the sparks that alight upon it from the steam-vessels that plough its surface. There was no course open, therefore, to the hellish archer but to turn round and quit the field. His sharpest, surest arrows had failed, and there was no use in fitting inferior ones to the string. To have emptied his quiver would have rendered his defeat only the more galling. Hence, when Jesus said, "Get thee behind me Satan," he did as he was bidden, and it is not surprising that he beat an ignominious retreat.

Some of our readers may be ready to ask: "What interest have we in the devil?" In reply, we have to say: if it does not concern us to know about the devil, how comes he to

have so prominent a place in the Scriptures? Hardly have we turned a page of the Bible, till we are introduced to himse but, letting that pass, have we no interest in knowing that in the encounter between Jesus and the devil, the former came off victor? Is it not most delightful and assuring to think of Jesus as the conqueror of Satan? Which left the devil or Jesus? Let Matthew inform us-"Then the devil," &c. We might be pitied were the devil the master of the universe. With what cruelty and caprice he would govern! Strong, and cunning, and active, and malignant as the devil is, the friends of Christ have nothing to fear from: him. Jesus can bruise him under their feet. He conquered him when on earth for Himself, and he can conquer him for his followers. Suppose that the devil had triumphed wheat he and Christ came into collision, what then? Mankind would be without a Saviour. The commission of one sine would have incapacitated Jesus for making atonement for the world's guilt; so that the reading of this clause-" Then the devil leaveth Him," should heighten our admiration of Christ, increase our confidence in Him, and thrill us with joy. It is most consoling to realize that when Satan came see Him, he found nothing in Him of which to take hold, or out which to rest an accusation; and let us not forget that it was in our nature that Jesus fought with, and overcame the archapostate. We are prone at times to apologise for the fall of our first parents, and our own falls into sin; and at such moments it is well to bear in mind that when Satan attacked Jesus on his human side, he sustained defeat. Jesus is our example, and when we sin, we should not dream of excusing ourselves. We can drive the devil before us, and we should. in imitation of Christ. "He was in all points tempted like. as we are, yet without sin;" and this is how it should be with. us. Blame ever attaches to us when the devil gets the advantage of us, else why are we commanded to resist the devil. and certified that if we do, he will flee? I candidly, confess, that when I call to mind Christ's victory over the devil in the wilderness, I have no heart to frame excuses for; those who either get into wrong moral states, or do wrong moral acts.

We are sometimes told that in "great attempts it is glorious even to fail." The devil's attack on Jesus was undoubtedly a "great attempt," but we question if his experience was this that it was "glorious to fail." What a contrast there must have been between his state of mind and that of Christ's at the close of the encounter! Satan gained nothing by it. It did not add to his happiness or renown. On the contrary, it must have augmented his misery. It were not easy to do justice to the disappointment and the gloom which must have gathered over his spirit. How the thought of failure must have tormented him, and damped for a while his zeal as a door of evil! The failures of the wicked are always much sadder than the failures of the righteous. encounter with the devil was immensely advantageous to Jesus. It exercised, and consequently strengthened, his virtue. It deepened his joy. How glad He must have been when all was over, that He had repelled the adversary! His gladness must have been heavenly in its nature. Moreover, the devil's departure was the signal for the descent of a troop of ministering angels: "And behold, angels came and ministered unto him." Or, as Milton puts it-

"So Satan fell; and straight a flery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who, on their plumy vans, received him seft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air."

Apparently none took part in the moral duel between Jesus and the devil except themselves. Alone Christ wrestled with the "antagonist of nature, God, and the universe," and cost him down; but the terrible conflict was beheld by a "cloud of witnesses." God was a spectator of it, and angels were interested spectators of it. Besides the human there are other eyes. Accordingly, as soon as the battle was at an end, Jesus found Himself the centre of a bright circle of jubilant, adoring, and ministering angels. They had seen all

that was going on, and, under divine guidance, they became visible and ministrant at the right time. Their coming was not accidental, but intentional. God sent them to mark his interest in his Only Begotten Son, and express his sympathy with Him in the splendid victory which He had won; and in the angels that were despatched with the needed succour, He would have willing messengers. One sees not how the angels could have helped Christ whilst the encounter lasted, but it is obvious that earlier interference on their part would have detracted from the glory of the victory which, single-handed, Jesus achieved over the devil. Had they congregated round Christ sooner it might have been thought, whether justly of unjustly, that the devil's defeat was due to angelic intervention fully more than to Christ's moral rectitude. What was the number of the angels, or how they acted in relation to Jesus, are points which we cannot determine. Perhaps they-

"set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine
Ambrosial fruits, fetched from the tree of life,
And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink."

41

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Perhaps too they-

"Sung heavenly anthems of his victory Over temptation and the tempter proud."

"And joy'd to crown
The victor's head,
When Satan flew
Before his frown."

The object of their visit was to do Jesus good; and there were many ways in which they could be of service to Histing The evangelist contents himself with saying that they minist tered to Him; and he leaves us to infer what a blessed thing it must be to have angels for our attendants. It was worth Christ's while to resist the devil. By repelling histing, He attracted angels. Elijah was miraculously fed by one angel in the wilderness; but a company of angels waited out Christ, and richly supplied the wants by which He was set the moment pressed. His trust in God had its reward. The

Father did not suffer his beloved Son to perish of hunger. By the hands of angels he provided for Him; and their ministering to Jesus should teach us that, if the world is over-run with bad angels, it is no less full of angels who delight to serve God, and minister to the "heirs of salvation."

As regards the world, there is a diversity of opinion amongst men. Some praise it; others condemn it. We sympathize with both parties. It is a grand, rich, beautiful, and suitable world; but it is not in earthly society, or things, to fill the human soul. The soul is too big for that; and, as compared with heaven, "earth is a desert drear." Sin has converted the world into a wilderness; and it is a wilderness with a devil in it; he, "as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." There is no escaping him. Indirectly or directly he brings himself into contact with us, and tries to make us wicked and wretched like himself. No strange thing befel Jesus when He found Himself face to face with the tempter. He crosses the path of us all, and we must either vanquish him, or submit to him. It lies with ourselves to decide which it shall be. The world we inhabit is a world of trial. It is more. It is a world of temptation. It is wrong to seek temptation. Jesus did not. There is no need to seek it. It finds us; and we are obliged either to resist it or yield to it. We cannot shun it by leaving the solid land and taking to the sea, or rushing into the desert. Some places are fuller of temptation than others; but where is it not! It meets us in the quiet village and in the crowded city, with its bustle and din. It meets us at the fireside, and in the counting-house, or the workshop. Where did the conflict between Christ and the devil take place? In the wilderness ! To Satan all temptation may be traced, and he plants himself between every one of us and heaven. God does not approve of him tempting us; but as he suffers us to tempt each other, so he suffers the devil to tempt us. What then, should we do relative to the devil? What did Jerus do? He resisted him; and so may we, so should we.

We should carry about with us, as though it were a part ourselves, the shield of faith-faith in the truths of the Bible, and, above all, the truth about the "Christ of God." Wanting it, how can we quench the fiery darts that fly thick about us? Drawing daily upon the strength of Christ, we should bravely fight the devil, and there are a thousand reasons why we should. He is not invincible. God never permits any to be tempted beyond what they can bear: Satan cannot compel us to sin; and overcoming him lands us, so to speak, among the angels. It draws them down: Temptation on its under side is a most mysterious and difficult subject. "Clouds and darkness are round about it," and we should express ourselves regarding it with more than ordinary caution: but the true way to turn it into a source of blessing is to to resist it. There is a wide difference between resisting it and yielding to it. To encourage the devil is to drive the angels away; whereas, to put the devil to flight to secure the ministering presence of the angels. angels may not visit those who conquer him, as did Jesus but real angels will. We cannot resist temptation without greatly increasing our happiness, and strengthening our virtue; and on these, and the like grounds, must rest its justification. Abraham's faith was put to a severe test where he was commanded to slay or sacrifice his son Isaac, and what was the consequence? It was mightily invigorated. The winds of temptation, sweeping over "trees of righteousness?" and, rudely shaking them, cause them to take firmer root. If we would have angels for our companions, we must pay the price demanded—oppose a stern front to the devil.

Belfast.

G. Cron, B.A. 115

hu. 16

He (Christ) walked in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. His sphere melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men, and, being of a truth sphere melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments and rich symphonies, through all our hearts, and modulates and divinely leads them.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the Acts o

Subject: Paul's final Visit to Jerusalem; or, the Apostle as a Prisoner defending himself before the People.

""And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now auto you," &c.—Acts xxi. 40, and xxii. 1—29.

AUL appears before us now in a new condition; he is a prisoner; he was "bound with two chains." (Acts xxi. 33.) In this condition we shall find him now in every chapter to the close of his memorable life. He closes his connection with this city by two defences of himself—the one addressed to the people, and the other to the great council of the nation. We have now to notice his defence before the people.

21 This subject will take us from the last verse of the 21st chapter to the 30th of the next. Indeed, the last verse of the 21st ought to have been put as the first of the 22nd chapter; the division is unfortunate, unjustifiable, and unwise. The position from which the apostle delivered his defence before the people is noteworthy. He "stood on the stairs." The stairs were the steps leading from the area of the temple into the castle of Antonia, and up which he had been forcibly borne by the soldiers. (Acts xxi. 2, 5.) His position was a commanding one, standing on an elevation commanding a view of the temple, with crowds assembled at

the base of the building, protected from their fury by the soldiers, having the "licence" of the "chief captain" to speak, he addressed them with all the freedom of his noble and Christ-inspired nature. "And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying," &c. He "beckoned" with his hand to still the noise of the people, and he spoke in the Hebrew tongue, not because they would not have understood Greek, but because he wished to command their sympathies by demonstrating that he was an Israelite. With great rhetorical adroitness, he further conciliates the good-will of his audience by the courteous and even affectionate terms with which he addresses them as " men, brethran, and fathers." So far he succeeds. "And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence, and he saith," &c. The multitude which just before had raged like ocean in the storm, were reduced to a breathless stillness, with eager ear to listen to what the prisoner had to say. And now, taking the chapter to the 30th verse, we have three subjects forced on our attention—an autobiographic defence too genuine to be questioned—an audience too prejudiced for argument, and officers of law too weak to be generous or brave.

I. Here we have an autobiographic defence too genuine to be questioned. In Paul's defence on this occasion, there is nothing like special pleading—no attempt to invalidate opposing evidence. As an honest man who felt that his life would bear scrutiny, he gives a brief sketch of himself, that is all. (1.) He avows himself a Jew by birth and education. (Verse 3.) (2.) He describes his persecuting zeal against the Christians. (Verses 4 and 5.) (3.) He details his extraordinary conversion. (Verses 6 to 11.) (4.) He shows that his reception into the Church was by Jewish agency. (Verses 12 to 16.) (5.) He proves that his mission to the Gentiles was forced upon him by Divine authority. (Verses

17, 21.) In analyzing this autobiographic sketch, there are (a), points stated which are to be found elsewhere. account of his conversion here will be found in Acts ix. 3-19.* There are (b), points stated found elsewhere, but in a modified form. For example, it is said in Acts ix. that the men which journeyed with Paul heard a voice, and here (verse 10), that they heard not the voice. This is satisfactorily explained by supposing that the voice in the former place meant mere sound, and here articulate utterance. Such slight variation of testimony, an enlightened and impartial judgment will ever regard as confirming rather than weakening the general trustworthiness of the narrative. There are (c) points stated which are not found elsewhere such, for example, as the "trance" in the 17th verse. Neither our purpose or space will allow us to go more minutely into this autobiographic defence. + Concerning the whole, however, four things are very remarkable concerning it. (1.) In it, self is criminated. Paul has not a word to say in vindication of his conduct prior to his conversion. He virtually denounces himself. He even confesses guilt in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen. (2.) In it, Christ is honoured. His conversion is ascribed to Christ, who appeared to him on the road to Damascus; also his commission to the Gentiles. (3.) In it, there is manifest honesty of soul. How open and frank is every utterance. (4.) In it, conversion appears as the Twenty-five years, or more, had ever memorable epoch. passed away since Paul's conversion, yet the incidents were so fresh in memory, that he details them with all the minuteness with which they were detailed at first, as found in the 9th chapter. Conversion is the most memorable epoch in the biography of souls.

II. HERE WE HAVE AN AUDIENCE TOO PREJUDICED FOR ARGUMENT. Notwithstanding this autohiographic defence, so

[•] See Homilist, vol. v., third series, p. 72.

[†] The reader will find several of the verses homiletically treated in the present number.

respectful, so frank, so sufficient in every respect for the occasion, no sooner did he refer to his mission to the Gene tiles in the 21st verse, than they broke out into a violent interruption. "And he said unto me, depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said. Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes and threw dust into the air." The word "Gentiles" fell from his lips like a spark upon the tinder of thefr bigotry. The odium theologicum raged so furiously within them that they could not listen to another word, or tolerate him for another moment. "Away with such a fellow front the earth; it is not fit that he should live." They would not allow him to utter another word in justification. them all the charges brought against him were more than? true. He was a monster to be swept from the face of the earth-"away with such a fellow from the earth." The old voice that filled Jerusalem on the day of Christ's crucifixion! comes out again in thunder. Their rage was ungovernable? "They cast off their clothes and threw dust into the air." The act described here may be either that of tossing up their loose cloaks or outer garments, or that of violently shaking them without removal; not as a gesture of concurrence of applause in which sense agitation of the dress is some times mentioned in the classics, but as a spontaneous express sion of intense and irrepressible excitement. Throwing dust into the air-not as it has sometimes been explained, that is might descend upon their own heads as a sign of mourning. II an idea probably connected with the false assumption this they rent their garments, whereas they only shook or tosses them. The act described is to be understood precisely like the one before it, as an outward symptom of internal rage resembling its expression in the lower animals, and said ** be common in the East upon the part of whole crowds, when impatient or exasperated."*

* Alexander.

III. HERE WE HAVE OFFICERS OF LAW TOO WEAK TO BE GENEROUS OR BRAVE. "The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know wherefore they cried so against him."

First: Fear of the people made the chief captain too timid to behave generously towards Paul. Why did the chief captain—the Roman tribune—command Paul to be brought into the castle, scourged, and bound? Not because he could have been in any way convinced of his guilt, but because he wished to conciliate the raging mob who cried out, "Away with such a fellow from the earth!" For fear of the Jewish mob this commander of the garrison examined him by scourging. According to the Roman law, Paul was scourged in order to extract from him a confession of guilt which no witnesses could prove. " Scourging was a species of judicial torture. intended like the similar but worse devices of the Inquisition, and some other civilized but barbarous tribunals, to supply the want of proof or information by extorting a confession or compelling a prisoner to accuse himself. From this use torture has acquired a euphemistic name; the application of the rack, the iron boot, the thumb screws, and a hundred other hellish cruelties, being known in history as putting men (or women) to the question. In comparison with these refinements, there was something merciful in the Roman practice of examining by scourges." This species of barbaric ferocity still lingers about Christendom. Second: Fear of the Roman power forced him to desist from his cruelties. While the indignities and cruelties were being inflicted upon him. Paul, with the heroism of a great man, said, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" From the conversation that took place from verse 26-30, three things are observable. (a) Paul's self-command. Tortured and bleeding under the lash, he speaks without rage or even excitement—speaks to the bold Roman himself: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman!" (b) The apostle's civic superiority to the Roman

tribune. The one was a "free-born" citizen of Rome, the other was a citizen only by purchase. "With a great sum obtained I this freedom," said the captain. The right of Roman citizenship was conferred only on such foreigners as had rendered some signal service to the state. As the moral tone of the empire lowered, it became a purchasable commodity. This chief captain thus obtained his citizenship. "But I was born free," says Paul, as if he had said, "I am a greater Roman than thou." Paul was born in Tarsus, a city whose inhabitants were admitted to the rights of citizenship by Augustus. (c) The force of the Roman name. As soon as they heard that Paul was a Roman, the office shrank with dread from the outrage he was committing, and the soldiers recoiled. "Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain, also, was afraid after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him."

This incident accords with Roman history. Cicero, against Verres, says, "Whoever he might be whom you were hurrying to the cross, were he even unknown to you, if he but said that he was a Roman citizen, he would necessarily obtain from you, the prætor, by the simplest mention of Rome, if not an escape, yet at least a delay of his punishment." And again, "It is a heinous sin to bind a Roman citizen; it is wickedness to beat him; it is next to parricide to kill him; and what shall I say to crucify him?"

REPOSE OF GREAT MINDS.

Really great minds seem to have cast off from their hearts the grave's earth, as well as dissipated the clouds which conceal the heaven from our view, and they thus disclose to themselves and to us a clear and blissful world of everlasting repose. The beauty of such minds appears simple and unagitated, extending, like the blue ether, over the world and time. And it is the repose produced by satisfaction and completion, not exhaustion from the fatigue of continuous endeavour; which gives an expression of serenity to their eyes, and imprints the quiet on their lips.

Yomiletic Aotes on the Epistle of James.

(No. IV.)

Subject: Soul-testing.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—Jas. i. 12.

I. That man here is in soul-testing circumstances. All are beset with afflictions. To such men as James is addressing, such afflictions are not misfortunes, still less are they punishments. They are trials—tests. By them a man is tested in his own judgment, in the sight of man, and under the eye of God. First: There are those that test his with. Much that happens forces him to ask with ever designing earnestness, "Is there a spiritual world?" Is there any advantage in virtue?" Acc. Secondly: There are those that test his letter. How many things on the many forms of selfishments e.g. pride, accumulation for self, misanthropy, &c. And are there not some one that test his letter from idols."

THET WAN'S WELL BEING CONSERS IN STANDING THIS THEST. Whilst these tests are applied to all, he alone is the and wicked man may suffer, but he does not endure. Endurance is well-being; for, of such as endures, the text teaches—

First: He has present blessines. A heart free thoul the wounds of rections, a conscience not outraged by wrong doing, an inferiorise with the Holy One not interrupted by sin, a power of Christian thefulness not weakened by conscious with a Heatt beating high with true hopes, which these constitute the blessidness of the winn who stands well all soultests. Belondly: He has presented becomes

approved as genuine, he shall receive a crown of life." The metaphor, "approved as genuine," δτι δόκιμος γενόμενος, has reference to money which has been properly tried and refined, and so is "receivable." To men whose characters are thus tried, and who are thus accepted, there is honour. (a) The honour is certain, "promised." (β) The honour is lasting, "crown of life." (γ) The honour is God-given, "The Lord," &c. (δ) The honour is given to those who are prepared for it, "those that love God." Only love to God can make a man truly endure temptations. Only love to God can qualify a man for spiritual honour. That is the royalty, without which the crown would be but a bauble and a burden.

(No. V.)

Subject: The Sources of Good and Evil.

"Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my belowed brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."—Jas. i. 13—18.

Men have made mighty mistakes about the sources of good and of evil. Of these sources a metaphysical explanation has never yet been given—probably, never will be. But the text, in common with other Scripture, presents us with two distinct and sufficiently practical facts.

I. ALL GOOD IS FROM THE CREATOR.

This is shown here by James. 1. From the negative character of God. He is (a) non-temptable. For any being to be temptable, he must be able to conceive new thoughts, and also to cherish new emotions. In that temptation consists. Since God can never see evil in any other guise than He, always has, and since He cannot feel towards it in any other

manner than with his eternal hatred, it is evident He cannot be tempted; He is infinitely incorruptible. God is also (\$\beta\$), non-tempting-"neither tempteth He any man." Every revelation of Him manifests his desire that we should become "partakers of His holiness." Another way in which James shows all good is from the Creator, is, 2. From the positive character of God. The text leads us to regard (a), His essential purity. He is the Father of lights. He is the origin of all lights-material, mental, and moral. He is the central sun of the universe, from whom every ray of beauty, truth, and goodness, proceeds. (B) His general benevolent activity in the world. God is here described as ever active, and ever active in bestowing all the good gifts the world receives. In God, activity means beneficence. (7) His special efforts to subdue evil in man. All goodness in man is His offspring. Through the instrumentality of his word, He has generated all that is holy in character. "Of his own will begat He us," &c.

II. All evil is from the creature.

Whence, then, comes evil if not from God? All comes from the creature, and much from the creature, man. The text gives us the biography of evil in man. We have, (1.) The genesis of evil. Here are three things in its production. (a) Feeling-"lust." A forbidden thing is first desired. (A) Thought. "Conceived." Man, unlike the brute, has the power of thinking upon his feelings, and thus either of intensifying or weakening them. Thought kindles incipient feelings into passions. (y) Volition "bringeth forth." Volition is the bringing of the emotion into an action. not a quality, not a mysterious entity; but an act-a "transgressing of the law." (2.) The maturity of evil. "When it is finished." Sin is finished when the transgressing volition has passed, and still more finished when the act has been so repeated as to become a habit. You see the sin of lying, intemperance, &c., "finished" in some men. That is completed, consolidated by habit. (3.) The issue of evil.

ten Bringelli forth death? What the death of existence, narry (of consciousness, nor yet of abligation; but the douth, of "Treedomy of self-reauect, happiness, and all the principles at ston of Lim mannists his deducted as should ignised Bond Pristol in the grow refered ". or mind ell Red retrain gliows all good is com the Orector, it if an the orething stander of God. The rear intention or gare (a. Alie cometial parity. He is no flater of light . The is the origin of all lights transfer of the central control with of the fairful of the mount overly nev of Businer: The History of Nacman's Disease and Oure: 197 - hon traite of certain Forces in the Life of Man: Salisb Amilyais at Somily the Sebin Mundelo und Forty Ditte. viel Now Nasman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a grant with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in water Shit ha was a lepen. And the Syrians had gone ont by companies, said had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid a said she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the thing of Syria stid. Go to be, and I will send a letter unto the himself (Tirsel, ... And He departed, and took with him ten telepts of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now, when this letter is come unto thee, behold. I have therewith sent wasman my serv Welther, that thou may but recover him of his teprosy. And it can be tpass, when the king of Israel And injudy the letter that he would clethes, and said, Am I God; to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore sider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. of was so, when Elisha the man of God had acard that the lang -Issuel Mad-rent his clother, that he send to the king, saying, Whard theat about rest the clethes let have come now to me, and he shall in that there is a prophet in Israel. So Names came with his h and with his charrot, and stood at the door of the house of Allahand Elisha sent a messenger filto him saying, the and wish filter bever times, and the flesh that Forms again to the lated thou what tellern! I But Masmen was whoth and went a way, and said; Behold I thought He mill murely come out to me, and stand and call mand name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper, Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damasqua, 1830 hand all the waters of Israel? may I not west in them, and be that the bound of the waters of Israel? may I not west in them, and be the second of the seco

AAMAN, in a working point of when was a great manner of a terrible disease. He was a lepen. Leprday was a terrible disease. He was a lepen. Leprday was a terrible disease. heredday, painful, contagious, loadhouse, and his fatal. In all respects it resembled sin. His disease and his cure, as here sketched, manifest certain yorks which have every been, and still are, at work in society and which but he seed the formation of character and the regulation of destiny.

captain an introduction to the king; who, ir I. THE FORCE OF WORLDLY POSITION. Why all the interests displayed in his own country, and in Israel, concerning Naaman's disease? The first verse, of this chapter explains it. "Now Naaman captain of the host of Syria was a great iman," &c. Perhaps there were many men in his own disc. trict who were suffering from lepposy, yet little interest was felt in them. They would group under their sufferings and die unsympathised with and unhelped. But because this man's worldly position was high kings worked prophets? bwere engaged, nations were excited for his cure. At her every Seen a sad fact in our history that we magnify both the triels and the virtues of the grandees, and think but little of the griefs, and graces of the lowly. If a man implied position is in trial it is always " a great trial," of which people talk, and which the press will record. If he does a good work it is always "and great work," and is trumpeted half the world over. This fact indicates—first, the lack of intelligence in popular symilar pathy. Reason teaches that the calamities of the wealthy? where many mitigating circumstances, and therefore the greater sympathy should be towards the poor. It indicates secondly the lack of manliness in popular sympathy. There is a fawning servility most dishonourable to human nature in T showing more sympathy to the rich than to the poor in ostaffering. HL Tu

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II. THE FORCE OF INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE. "And the Syrian had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid: and she waited on Namman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, would God, my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord saying, Thus and thus said the maid, that is of the land of Israel. This little girl, who had been torn from her native country and carried into the land of strangers by the ruthless hand of war, told her mistress of a prophet in Israel who had the power to heal lepers. This led the king of Syria to persuade Namman to visit Judæa, and to give the leprous captain an introduction to the king; who, in his turn, introduced him to the prophet, who effected his healing.

The influence of this little slave girl should teach us three things. First, The magnanimity of young natures. Though she was an exile in the land of her oppressors, instead of having that revenge which would have led her to rejoice in the sufferings of her captors, her young heart yearned with sympathy for one of the ruthless conquerors. A poor child, a' humble servant, a despised slave, may have a royal soul. Second, The power of the humblest individual. This poor girl, with her simple intelligence, moved her mistress; her mistress, the mighty warrior; then Syria's king was moved, by him the king of Israel is interested, and then the prophet of the Lord. Thus this little maid may have been said to have stirred kingdoms. No one, not even a child "liveth to himself." Each is a fountain of influence. Third, The dependence of the great upon the small. The recovery of this warrior resulted from the word of this captive maid. Some persons admit the hand of God only in what they call great events. But what are great events? Great and small are but relative terms. And even what we call small often sways and shapes the great. One spark of fire may turn all London into a whiff of smoke.

III. THE FORCE OF SELF-PRESERVATION, . "And the king .

of Syria said, "Go to; go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the King of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy." It would seem that Maaman at once consulted Benhadad, the King of Syria, on the subject suggested by the captive maid, and having obtained an introduction to the king of Israel hurried off. taking with him "ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment"—great wealth which he was prepared to sacrifice in the recovery of his The instinct of self-preservation is one of the strongest in human nature. "Skin for skin; all that a man hath will he give in exchange for his life." Men will spend fortunes and traverse continents in order to rid themselves of disease and prolong life. This strenuous effort for recovery from disease reminds us of-

First: The value of physical health. This man had lost it, and what was the world to him without it? Bishop Hall truly says of him, "The basest slave in Syria would not change skins with him." Health—this precious blessing—is so lavishly given, that men seldom appreciate it till it as lost.

Secondly: The neglect of spiritual health. This man was evidently morally diseased,—that is, he neither knew of the true God nor had sympathy with Him. He was a moral invalid. A worse disease than leprosy infected his manhood and threatened the ruin of his being. Yet there is no struggling after spiritual recovery. This is a general evil.

IV. THE FORCE OF CASTE-FEELING. "And the King of Syria said, Go to; go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." Why did the King of Syria send Naaman with the letter to the Monarch of Israel? Was it because he was given to understand that that king would work the cure?

No; for mention was made by the captive girl of no one who could effect the cure but "the prophet that is in Samaria." Or was it because he thought that Israel's monarch would discover the prophet and influence him on behalf of the afflicted officer? No; for in his royal letter he says, "Behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to thee that them mayest recover him of his leprosy." Why, then? Simply because of caste-feeling. He forsooth was too great to know a prophet—too great to correspond with any one but a king. What was a prophet, though radiating with divine intelligence and nerved with divine energy, compared even to a soulless man if a crown encircle his brow?

First: Caste-feeling sinks the real in the adventitions. The man who is ruled by it so exaggerates externalisms as to lose sight of those elements of moral character which constitute the dignity and determine the destiny of man. He lives in bubbles.

Secondly. Caste-feeling curtails the region of human sympathies. He who is controlled by this feeling, has the circle of his sympathies limited not only to the outward of man, but to the outward of those only in his own sphere. All outlying his grade and class are nothing to him. Castefeeling, thirdly, antagonises the Gospel. Christ came to destroy that middle wall of partition that divides men into classes. The Gospel overtops all adventitious distinctions, and directs its doctrines, and offers its provisions to man as man.

V. The force of guilly suspicion. "And it came to pass when the King of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I a God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore, consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me?" The construction that the monarch put upon the message of his royal brother, was, instead of being true and liberal, the most false and ungenerous. He ascribed evil motives where there were none, and saw maligi-

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nant intentions where there was nothing but a good-natured purpose. All this springs from that suspicion which is a prewalent and disastrous evil in the social life of this world. Where this suspicion exists, one of the two, if not the two following things, are always found. First, a knowledge of the depravity of society. The suspicious man has frequently learnt, either from observation, testimony, or experience, or all these, that there is such an amount of falsehood, and dishonesty in society, as will lead one man to take an undue advantage of another. However, whether he has learnt this or not, it is, a lamentable fact, patent to all observant eyes. the existence of evil in himself. The suspicious man knows that he is selfish, false, dishonest, unchaste, and he believes that all men are the same. If he were not evil, he would not be suspicious of others, even though he knew that all about him were bad. An innocent being, I trow, would move amongst a corrupt age without any suspicion whatever. Being destitute of all bad motives himself, he would not be able to understand the corrupt motives of others. On the other hand, were society ever so holy, a bad man would still be suspecting all. An unchaste, selfish, fraudulent man, would suspect the purity, the benevolence, and the integrity of angels, if he lived amongst them. The greatest rogues are always the most suspicious; the most lustful husbands are always the most jealous of their wives, and the reverse. Well has our great dramatist said, "Suspicion haunts the guilty soul." miserable thing, truly, is this suspicion. Heaven deliver us from suspicious people! Suspicion is the poison of all true friendship; it is that which makes kings tyrants-merchants, exactors-masters, rigorous, and the base-natured of both sexes, diseased with a jealousy that shatters connubial confidence, and quenches all the lights of connubial life.

VI. THE FORCE OF REMEDIAL GOODNESS. Though the king could not cure, there was a remedial power in Israel equal to this emergency. That power, infinite goodness delegated to Elisha. God makes man the organ of his restorative powers.

It was so now with Elisha. It was pre-eminently so with Christ. It was so also with the apostles. The redemptive treasure is in "earthly vessels." The passage suggests several points concerning this remedial power. First: It transcends natural power. "When Elisha, the man of God, had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes. . . . he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him now come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." The monarch felt his utter insufficiency to effect the cure. Natural science knew nothing of means to heal the leper. Supernatural revelation reveals the remedy through Elisha. Herein is an illustration of Christianity. No natural science can cure the leprosy of sin; it tried for ages but failed. Second: It offends human pride. "So Naaman came with his horses, and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thec, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away and said, behold I thought he will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place and recover the leper." Naaman came in all the pomp of wealth and station to the prophet's door, expecting. no doubt, that Elisha would hurry out to do him honour. But a true man is never moved by glitter. He did not even go out to meet the illustrious visitor, but sent a messenger to bid him go to the Jordan and there wash. But both the unbending independency of the prophet, and the simple method he prescribed so galled the proud heart of the Syrian warrior, that "he was wroth, and went away and said, Behold I thought he would surely come out to me," &c. Herein is an illustration of Christianity. It strikes at the root of pride, and requires us to become as little children.

Third: It clashes with popular prejudice. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" It is common for men to regard that which belongs

to themselves, and to their country, as the "better." Our children, our family, our sect, our class, our nation, "better." This man's prejudice said "Abana and Pharpar;" the prophet said "Jordan," and this offended him. "And he went away in a rage." Herein again is an illustration of Christianity. Human prejudices prescribe this river, and that river for cleansing, but the gospel says "Jordan."

Fourth: It works by simple means. "And his servant came near and said to him, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, wash, and be clean? The means, to Naaman, seemed to be too simple to answer the end he sought. Had there been some severe regimen, or some painful operation, or some costly expenditure, he would have accepted it more readily, but "to wash," seemed too simple. The means of spiritual recovery are very simple. But men desire them otherwise. Hence ceremonies, pilgrimages, penances, fastings, and the like. "Believe, and thou shalt be saved," says God; man wants to do something more.

Fifth: It demands individual effort. "Then went he down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan according to the saying of the man of God." Naaman had to go down himself to the river, and to dip himself seven times in its waters. His restoration depended upon his individual effort. And so it is in spiritual matters. Each man must believe, repent, pray for himself. There is no substitution.

Sixth: It is completely efficacious. "His flesh came again, like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." The means employed for this leper's cure fully answered the end. Every vestige of the disease was gone, and he was restored to more than the vigour of his former manhood. Herein once more. "Believe and ye shall be saved." "Such were some of you; but ye are washed ye are cleansed."

VII. THE FORCE OF A NEW CONVICTION. "And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and

stood before him: and he said, Behold now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant. But he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it, but he refused. And Naaman said, shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice but unto the Lord."

Observe—First: The subject of the new conviction. What was the subject? That the God of Israel was the only God. This new conviction reversed his old prejudices, and the religious creed of his country. It was not reasoning, it was not teaching; experience had wrought this conviction into his soul. He felt that it was God's hand that healed him.

Second: The developments of this new conviction. A conviction like this must prove influential in some way or other. Abstract ideas may lie dormant in the mind, but convictions are ever operative. What did it do in Naaman? (1.) It evoked gratitude. Standing with all his company before the prophet he avowed his gratitude. "Now therefore I pray thee take a blessing of thy servant." Just before his cure he had anything but kindly feelings towards the prophet. was full of "rage." New convictions about God will generate [new feelings toward man. (2.) It annihilated an old prejudice. Just before his cure he despised Judea. Jordan was contemptible as compared with the rivers of Damascus. But now the very ground seems holy. He asks of the prophet liberty to take away a portion of the earth. "Shall there not then I pray thee be given to thy servant two mules? burden of earth?" A new conviction about God widens the soul's sympathies, raises it above all those nationalities of heart that characterise little souls. (3.) It inspired worship. "Thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering, nor sacrifice, but unto the Lord." His whole nature was so flooded with gratitude to that God who had healed him that his soul went forth in holy worship. Through the force of

this new conviction he felt as Paul did when he said, "What Things were dear to me, those I counted loss," &c.

".f. "e 800. VIII. THE FORCE OF ASSOCIATES. Naaman had been in the habit of worshipping "in the house of Rimmon" with his master the king. This probably he had done for years with other officers of the state. The influence of this he now felt counteracting the new conviction of duty. He felt that whilst it would be wrong for him to go there any more, yet he could not but go. "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon : when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing." Loyalty and gratitude towards the king contributed much to prevent him renouncing all connection with the house of Rimmon. How often do our associations prevent us from the full carrying out of our convictions ! It ought not to be so. "He that leveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me."

It is somewhat remarkable that the prophet Elisha, instead of exhorting Naaman to avoid every appearance of ideality, said to him, "Go in peace." The prophet no doubt had faith in the power of Naaman's conviction to guard him from any moral mischief.

Tations of the in the conduct as described in verses 20 to 22. In his case we have avarice, First, eager in its increment. "But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Nacinan, this Syran, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but as the Tim liveth, I will the him, and take somewas of him. So Gehazi followed their Nacinan." He saw, as he thought, a fine opportunity for his greed, and he eagenly deliced it. "I will him after him." A variety is one of the most hungry passions of the soul. At its never satisfied. Mad the dwirterious

man, like the fabled Briareus, a hundred hands, he would employ them all in ministering to himself. Dryden calls it—

"A cursed hunger of pernicious gold."

It is that passion that makes all men like Gehazi "run." Men are everywhere out of breath in their race for wealth. Second: This avarice is in one, associated with the most generous of men. He was the servant of Elisha, who, when Naaman offered some acknowledgment of his gratitude to him, exclaimed, in the most solemn way, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none." One would have thought that association with a generous soul like this would have consumed every base sentiment from Gehazi's heart. But when it once roots itself in the soul, it is the most inveterate of lusts. The history of modern enterprises shows us numerous examples of men who from early life have been in association with ministers, churches, religious institutions, and in some cases have themselves been deacons, chairmen of religious societies, and whose avarice has so grown in spite of all those influences as to make them swindlers on a gigantic scale. Thirdly: This avarice sought its end by means of falsehood. When Gehazi came up to Naaman, he said, "My master hath sent me, saving, Behold even now there be come to me from Mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets; give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver and two changes of garments." This was a flagrant falsehood. Avarice is always false. Its trades are full of tricks; its shops, of sophistries. All its enterprises employ the tongue of falsehood, and the hand of deceit.

X. The force of retributive justice. There is justice on this earth as well as remedial goodness, and Heaven often makes man the organ as well as the subject of both. Elisha, who had the remedial power, had also the retributive. Here we see retributive justice in—

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First: Detecting the wrongdoer. "And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy ser."

vant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?" Justice has the eyes of Argus; has more than the eyes of Argus—it sees in the dark. It penetrates through all fallacies. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, beholding the evil and the good."

Secondly: Reproving the wrongdoer. "Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and man-servants, and maid-servants?" An old expositor has quaintly put it, "Couldest thou find no better way of getting money than by belying thy master, and laying a stumbling-block before a young convert?" His avarice was a thing bad in itself, and bad also in seizing an opportunity which should have been employed for other and higher ends.

Thirdly: It punishes the wrongdoer. "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." He had money of the leper, but he had his disease too. In getting what he considered a blessing, he got a curse as well! Wealth avariciously gotten never fails to bring a curse in some form or other. If it does not bring leprosy to the body, it brings what is infinitely worse, the most deadly leprosy into the soul, and often entails injuries on posterity!

SUBJECT: The Sounds and Sights of Life.

"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."—Acts xxii. 9.

"And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man."—Acts ix. 7.

Analysis of Jomily the Seben Hundred und Giftieth.

ERE is a record of the *supernatural* in the life of Paul and his travelling companions when approaching Damascus. The fact that these supernatural phenomena were at "mid-day," and that the apostle's fellow travellers were

deeply sensible of them as well as the apostle, demonstrate that "the voice" that thundered in the ear, and "the light" that flashed around them were objective realities. The little discrepancy between the occurrence as given by Luke in the ninth chapter, and as stated by the apostle himself in the twenty-second, instead of invalidating, confirms the authenticity of the accounts. Identity of statement concerning the same occurrence, by two different individuals, after an interval of about twenty-five years, might justly awaken serious suspicions of collusion. But here, indeed, the verbal discrepancy is capable of an easy solution. When Luke says that the men who journeyed with Paul heard "a voice," and Paul says that they heard not "the voice," it may fairly be supposed that all that Paul means is that they heard not the articulate voice, but mere sound. The same sound which fell on the ear of his companions and communicated no idea, fell on Paul's ear, conveying a message from the Christ who was in heaven. And the same "light" also which revealed nothing to his companions; revealed the Son of God to him. So that you have here two things. First: A voice heard by all, but understood only by Paul. The voice produced, indeed, an impression on his companions. It vibrated on their ear, and so shocked their nervous system, that they fell "speechless;" but it conveyed no idea. Whereas, it conveyed a wonderful message deep into Paul's soul. "I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew tongue, &c." Second: A light seen by all, but revealing nothing except to Paul. The mystic light radiated about all with a brightness excelling that of "mid-day," and flooding them with feelings of alarm. But it revealed nothing. It was mere dazzling brightness; nothing more. But in that radiance what did Paul see ! "The Lord, even Jesus appeared unto" him.

Now, this extraordinary circumstance indicates what is common in human life. Everywhere there are med, hearing the same voite, but receiving different objects. A worker than same lights, but observing different objects. A worker than the but hearing to some, is there empty sound to

others. A "light" revealing the grandest realities to some, discloses nothing to others. There is everywhere through human society, diverse subjectivity under identical eternalism; or different mental phenomena under identical circumstances.

I. MEN'S LIVES IN RELATION TO MATERIAL NATURE SHOW THIS. The "lights" of nature, to the thoughtless multitude, reveal nothing but mere sensuous forms-just what they reveal to the brute, and nothing more. To the superstitious they reveal hosts of unearthly existences, presiding over the various operations of the world, dreaded as demons or worshipped as gods. To the sceptical philosopher they reveal nothing but a grand system of well-organised forces, moving and working by its own inherent impulse with all the resistlessness of an absolute fate. To the enlightened and devout Christian, they reveal a wise and loving Father, "who is God over all, blessed for evermore." The "voices" of nature, too, which are boundlessly varied, and set in every key, convey different impressions to different minds. To some nothing but mere sensation, to others, superstitious awe; to others, scientific intelligence; to others, thoughts from God Himself. Thus it is that the same world is a different thing to different minds.

THE The history of the world, from antediluvian days to this hour, is very differently regarded by different men. Its lights and voices reveal varied and almost opposite things. To some history is without any governing law at all. Its social, mercantile, political movements, are ascribable only to blind impulse and capricious passions. All is chaos. There is no law seen shaping or systematizing the whole. To others, history has only the governing law of human might. Such explain all, on the principle that the strong preys upon the weak. The progress and decline of commerce, the rise and fall of empires, the fate of mighty battles,

are all ascribable to superior might. To others, history is governed exclusively by evil. The devil is absolutely the god of the human world. The whole lives and acts under the shadow of his dark wings. He is in the schemes of the trader, the thunders of the orator, the edicts of the despot, the craft of the priest, the rage of the warrior. He inspires the activities of men, and shapes the destinies of the race. To others, history is governed by the mediatorial plan of God. The restorative purpose of Heaven, as revealed in the Bible, is seen running through the ages, stimulating, shaping, and subordinating all things. Even the bitterest sufferings of humanity are regarded as parturition throes giving birth to a higher order of things. Thus, then, through all human history it holds true that, as with Paul and his companions, the same sounds and sights differently affect different men.

III. MEN'S LIVES IN RELATION TO THE INSPIRED ORACLESHOW THIS. The Bible has wonderful "lights," and wonderful "sounds," but nothing is more true than that they differ ently affect different men. Ecclesiastical history, theological polemics, as well as the religious life of our own age, are fraught with illustrations of this. The sceptic and the believer, the Papist and the Protestant, the Calvinist and the Pelagian, the Socinian and the Trinitarian, the Churchman and the Nonconformist, are examples as to how the same "light" and "voice" of the one Book affect different men. What is the articulate voice of God to one, is mere hollow sound to another. And what is "a light," revealing even the Eternal Himself, to one, is either darkness, or stupefying brightness to another.

IV. Men's lives in relation to the gospel ministry show this. How differently the same sermon is regarded by various members of the congregation! The sermon which, as a Divine "voice," speaks to the conscience of some, has no meaning to others; or which, as Divine "light," flashes moral conviction, and reveals Christ to some, is either not seen at

all, or regarded as a mere glare of human genius, or a blaze of human enthusiasm, revealing nothing Divine.

CONCLUSION. First: This subject reveals a distinguishing attribute of human nature. Men have the power of hearing and of seeing with the soul all outward sounds and sights. Brutes have "the hearing ear and seeing eye," as we have, but all they see and hear terminate in the region of sensation. Souls have inner eyes and ears. Ezekiel, Isaiah, John on Patmos, our own Milton, &c., show what men can see and hear with those organs of the soul. Christ has told us that the pure in heart shall see God Himself. Man, in one word, has the power of receiving, modifying, and interpreting the impression the outward makes upon him. Secondly: This subject explains the great difference between spiritually and carnallyminded men. Society may be divided into two classes—the carnal and the spiritual; the one living to the flesh, and for the flesh; the other to the spirit and for the spirit. Why this difference? The one hears in the sounds, and sees in the sights of life what the other does not. The spiritual realizes the spiritual even here. He looks away from "the things that are seen and temporal." Thirdly: The subject presents an object of life after which all should strive. Each man should strive to get the eyes and the ears of his soul so quickened as to see and hear the Divine everywhere in life. When the servant of Elisha had his eye and ear open, he saw and heard the supernatural. So it will be with us. We are now in the spiritual world. Spirits innumerable crowd around us. God is present. The voices of eternity are here, and yet we are deaf to them!

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Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. III.)

Subject: Philo-Coptic Fallacies.

ALF a century ago Egypt was regarded as a strong-hold of Infidelity. Its arts and sciences were said to belong to a period so remote as to leave us in doubt whether man had not occupied our earth many thousand years before Adam, and to dwarf into insignificance the majestic originality and revered antiquity of the Books of Moses. But further research has scattered these pretensions to the wind, and the wonder is, not that weighed in the balances of honesty and common-sense, they should have been found wanting; but that they should have so long been tolerated when the means of overturning them were so easy.

The savans who followed the French army into Egypt, were under orders, implied if not otherwise embodied, to revolutionize everything, and especially the religion of the Bible. When, therefore, they discovered the famous Zodiac, of Dendera, an astrological diagram painted on one of the ceilings in the temple at that place, their object was to fix its date at a period so very distant, that the Mosaic narratives of man's creation and early history, would be thrown into the shade, and the whole Bible narrative, if true at all, would dwindle into a very insignificant episode in the world's

history.

Trading on their vast and admitted attainments in science, they published to the world a dim outline of the process by which they had agreed to assign to it an antiquity of about eighteen thousand years. Timid readers of the Bible were struck dumb, and the more courageous quailed before "the rigid and infallible geometry" of astronomers supposed to be the wisest in Europe. No one took the trouble to question this decision, on its actual merits, by looking narrowly into the facts and deductions through which it was said to have been arrived at, and thus judgment was allowed to go by default. It will scarcely be credited, therefore, that this theory rests on a series of assumptions, based upon a plain and palpable falsehood. But so it is.

It is well known to astronomers, that besides its daily and annual revolution, our earth has a third movement in relation

to the heavenly bodies. Its poles revolve once in about 26,000 years, round the poles of the ecliptic, causing what is scientifically called the precession of the equinoxes. If, therefore, an old map of the stars should be found in which the place of our poles was unmistakably marked, the inference would be fair enough that this map had been projected just so long ago as was indicated by the distance, reduced to time, between that place and its place at present. Such an indication, or its equivalent—a line drawn through the earth's pole and the pole of the ecliptic, and called a colure—these French savans would have us believe that they had found in the famous Zodiac of Dendera. But, in reality, they had found nothing of the kind: they had only supposed that if it had been there it would have run parallel with the sides of the little square chamber in which it was discovered. Far less shrewd than Mrs. Glass, they proceeded to dress their hare before they had caught it, and arguing on a basis that never had any existence, gave forth to the world that they had proved the vast antiquity of this temple, and demonstrated that many centuries before Adam, Egypt had its schools of science.

Although this was the theory palmed off upon the world, these learned pundits actually disagreed among themselves as to where these imaginary colures ought to be, some of them contending that they should run diagonally across, and not coincident with, the walls of this mystic chamber. And thus, like their brother antiquary who proved that the round towers of Ireland faced the four cardinal points (!), they pro-

pounded nothing but their own perplexity.

The ceiling has been removed to Paris, where any one may see it and judge for himself. But we doubt whether it will be worth his while, the whole affair being nothing but an astro-mythological picture, drawn with so little accuracy that the stars are not in their proper positions; and though the signs of the Zodiac are all there, they are so huddled together that the sun, in traversing the ecliptic, must have been, more than once, in two of them at the same time. But this solemn fooling of the French philosophers, has long since received its death-blow, the Temple of Dendera having been proved to belong to the age of Tiberius Cæsar, instead of to a period ten times as remote.

This leads us to remark generally, on the age of the palaces and tombs of Egypt, which in almost every instance has been ridiculously exaggerated. The subject is not, how-

ever, so intimately connected with our present inquiry, that we should go into it at any length, so that we shall dismiss it with the remark, that, the pyramids aloue excepted, none of the buildings described by Herodotus 2,300 years ago are now standing, or can at all events be identified, though he gives such exact information as to their situation, bearings, distances, and architectural details, as would make them readily recognizable by the most superficial traveller.

Very well, then, say our foiled Egyptologists, supposing we must give up these astronomical and architectural proofs of Egypt's early greatness, the mysteries of her hieroglyphics are now laid fully open, and we can read the writing on the walls of her, "chambers of imagery," her palaces, and tombs, and temples. Can we? Let us see. About half a century has gone by since Dr. Young conceived the idea that certain hieroglyphics were intended to represent sounds—that they were, in fact, ornate, or elaborately formed letters. It seems pretty clear that some one had conceived the same thing long before, for Misson, in his "New Voyage to Italy," (vol. ii. part 1, p. 109), published in 1739, translates on this principle the name of Ramesses, mi Amun—"The well-beloved of the sun:" "The well-beloved of Ammon."

This rediscovery was put forth modestly enough at first; its application being restricted almost entirely to the names of those sovereigns who held rule in Egypt after the Greek conquest of that country. M. Champollion the zealous colleague of Dr. Young, honestly confesses that the names of the older Pharaohs were not to be deciphered by it. Let the reader judge for himself. Here are the names respectively assigned to the builders of the four principal pyramids: Raoa—Suphis I. or Cheopes; Rsho—Suphis II., or Cephrenes; Rmkkk—Mycerinus; and Ntsoktt—Nitocris. The Scripture names contrast rather advantageously—Ramses—Ramses; Shnshnk—Shishak; Zra—Zerah; Thrk—Tirhakah; Ncho Necho; Rebom—Rehoboam, and Joodamelek—Judah-melek, King of the Jews.

The ludicrous uncertainty which, according to Sydney Smith, applies to the ancient "biographical art," belongs to the dynastic annals of Old Egypt. Herodotus says that the great pyramid was built by Cheops; Manetho, that it was built by Suphis or Peroptes. The hieroglyphic reading of the name, as we have stated, is Raoa, according to all the accredited phonetic alphabets; but a special act of imagina-

tion changes it into Shouphoo! Humboldt, according to our old friend, "Good Words" (Feb., 1867, p. 127), rolls both names into one, calls him Cheops-Chufu, and assigns to him the date of 3400 B.C., with about as much reason as usually regulates the chronology of our German Egyptologists. Perhaps, like his colleague, Bunsen, he "wanted time" for some purpose of his own. Very candidly, indeed, does Dr. Rowland Williams confess the chevalier's weakness in such matters. "He wanted time for the growth of Jacob's family into a people of two millions, and he felt bound to place Joseph under a native Pharaoh." ("Ess. and Rev.," p. 57.) So he brought Abraham into Egypt a thousand years too soon, and quietly extended the sojourn of the Israelites in that country to fourteen centuries, in spite of the express declaration of the Bible to the contrary.

In this way, and on equally good authority—the authority of sheer caprice—do these mystics adjust "Egypt's place in

universal history."

Though the discovery of this wonderful key was regarded as the crowning glory of hieroglyphic literature, many of its symbols appear to have been understood long before, or at all events had had meanings assigned to them, which have been very little improved upon down to the days of Wilkinson and Bunsen. These conventional signs are various—figurative, symbolic, demonstrative, imitative, duplicative, pronominal, and "like some riddles," or resembling our heraldic rebuses; and most Egyptian inscriptions are interpreted by their aid, doubtful as it is, rather than by such as are purely phonetic.

Let us give a specimen of the chop-logic style in which these mixed inscriptions are made out. Here is a long scroll, written vertically, which our Egyptologists thus somewhat

freely translate:-

"Hi! hi! Oxen! tread the corn faster!

The straw for yourselves, and the corn for your master!"

Now, lest the uninitiated should suppose this song to have been read off fluently and satisfactorily, we will show the whole process by which this sublime result is arrived at.

The first character is assumed to be phonetic, and stands for H. It is followed by an expletive, or demonstrative, sign, representing a man with a stick, in the act of driving cattle; below which occurs the common sign of a fore arm, supposed to indicate action. The letters T N, said to mean ten, or

"you," twice repeated, the duplicative sign, and the figure of an ox, with the plural indication below it, conclude this first member of the stave. The same characters are then repeated, followed by three phonetic signs, or letters, T H O. supposed to mean toh, or straw, below which is an imitative sign, and other figures usually read as the letters, R M S,* but to which no special meaning is here assigned by our interpreters. The picture of a man seated, a measure or vessel jetting out grains, or points, presumed to represent corn, and followed by the plural sign, come next in order. The letter A, with another plural sign, which, on no authority at all, is guessed to mean "masters," and a repetition of the poor overworked ten-you-wind up this precious scroll. All, therefore, that the utmost ingenuity can make out is just this-H' you! you! H' you! you! oxen. H' you! you! H' you! you! straw, grains, men, you ("a" with plural sign). you.

Thus it will be seen that out of fifty-two characters, six only can be made out on the phonetic principle, the others being mere guess-work, with the very doubtful corroboration of a picture or two; or, what may be more scientifically

described as representative or demonstrative signs.

One other reputed source of information regarding ancient Egypt remains to be considered—her written records or history proper. Rejecting the trustworthy and sensible narrative of Herodotus, our Egyptologists appear to pin all their faith to Manetho, or the old Egyptian Chronicle, probably because they give them a much longer chronology. Their genealogies are literally endless! The latter contains thirty dynasties in one hundred and thirteen descents, during the long period of thirty-six thousand five hundred and twenty-five years. The other begins with the reign of Hephæstus, comprising "seven hundred and twenty-four-years and a half, and four days;" but squares matters by afterwards crowding seventy reigns into as many days!

If to all this we add that Manetho lived but a few centuries before the Christian era, and is only known to us through still later writers, who contradict each other, we should not have had any very great confidence in his means of informa-

^{*} Let us suggest that the letters are R, M, P, for mpre, corn or grain. That one of the letters is doubtful, that they are transposed, and that they come in the wrong place, are matters of little note to a thorough Egyptologist.

tion, even had the internal evidence of his chronicle been more satisfactory than it is.

After a long and thoughtful study of these so-called sidelights of Revelation, we cannot but think that a kind of judicial imbecility has befallen those who venture to make use of them in "derogation and depravation" of the sacred oracles. They have turned away from the truth, and have been turned unto fables; and the caution of Rabshakeh seems in one sense, as needful to them as it was to Hezekiah, "Behold thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which, if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it."

Biblical Criticism.

By-Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .- EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chapter xxi. 1.—And when it came to pass that we sailed having withdrawn from them, we came with straight course to Cos, and the day after to Rhodes, and thence to Patara. 2. And finding a ship passing over to Phænice, embarking, we sailed. 3. And sighting Cyprus, and leaving it behind on the left, we navigated to Syria, and sailed to Tyre; for there the ship was unlading the freight. 4. And finding out the disciples, we abode there seven days; who said to Paul by the Spirit, that he should not go on to Jerusalem. 5. And when it came to pass that we had fulfilled the days, going out we went, all with wives and children, setting us forward, until without the city; and bending our knees on the seashore, having prayed, 6. We withdrew from one another, and [we] entered the ship, but they [emphatic] returned home; 7. But we [empathic] having finished navigating, from Tyre reached to Ptolemais, and greeting the brethren we abode one day with them. 8. And on the morrow going out, we came to Cesarea; and going into the house of Philip the Gospeller, who was of the seven, we abode with

him. 9. Now this man had daughters, four maidens, prophesying: 10. And as we abode on many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, by name Agabus. 11. And coming to us and taking the girdle of Paul, having bound his own feet and hands, he said, This saith the Holy Ghost, The man [avooa] whose is this girdle, thus in Jerusalem the Jews shall bind, and shall deliver into the hands of Gentiles. 12. When then we heard this, we [emphatic] as well as they of the place, besought [him] that he should not go up to Jerusalem. 13. And Paul answered, What do ye weeping and quite breaking my heart? for I [emphatic] am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 14. And when he would not be persuaded, we were quiet, saying, The Lord's will be done. 15. And after those days, having made all ready, we went up to Jerusalem. 16. There came also some of the disciples from Cesarea with us, bringing Mnason, a certain Cyprict, an old disciple, with whom we might be guests. 17. And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18. And the next [day] Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders came thither. 19. And having greeted them, he set forth one by one what things God had done among the Gentiles by his ministry. 20. And they having heard, glorified God; and they said to him, Thou beholdest, brother, how many myriads there are among the Jews of them that have believed; and all are [imapXovoi] ready zealots of the law. 21. And they were informed concerning thee, that thou teachest all the Jews among the heathen to stand off from Moses, telling them not to circumcise [their] children, nor walk according to the manners. 22. What then is to do? at all events the multitude must come together, for they will hear that thou art come. 23. This then do which we tall thee: there are with us four men [avdpes] having a vow on themselves: 24. These take to thee and purify thyself with them, and bear the cost for them, that they may shave their heads; and all will know that of what they have been informed of concerning thee nothing is [true], but thou

walkest also thyself keeping the law. 25. But concerning the Gentiles that have believed, we [emphatic] wrote, judging that they keep no such thing, except that they beware both of idol-sacrificed [flesh], and blood, and [what is] strangled and fornication.

Misapplied Texts.

By Rev. WM. WEBSTER, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. Joint Editor of Webster and Wilkinson's Greek Testament, &c., &c.

(No. I.)

"The simplicity that is in Christ."—2 Cor. xi. 3.

ANY passages of Holy Scripture are perpetually quoted in a sense very different from that which the sacred writers intended they should have. We thus lose much of the instruction which we ought to derive from the holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Some of these erroneous applications may be traced to the defects and inaccuracies of our authorised version; but many arise from the want of careful attention to the context, and from the unfortunate habit of being led by the sound, rather

than the sense.

In 2 Cor. xi. 3, we have the expression, "the simplicity that is in Christ." These words have passed into a proverb. They are heard continually from the pulpit and the platform, in addresses to the throne of grace, alike in the great congregation and the social circle. I have never, however, heard any one attempt to give an explanation of the sense in which he used these words, and I fear that many would be sorely puzzled if we ventured to ask them, What mean ye by "the simplicity that is in Christ?"

Many would interpret these words as an admonition to hold fast the truth as it is embodied in Jesus, in his person, his work, based on the historical facts of his incarnation, his obedience to the law, his cross and passion, his resurrection and ascension, his appearance before God for us as our representative, Mediator and Intercessor; and would say that we are uniformly to speak according to the oracles of God, without any deleterious admixture of foreign elements imparted by means of philosophy and vainglorious deceit. They would quote several passages which describe the Gospel message as the simplest thing imaginable—"Look unto me, and be ye saved;" "Believe, and live;" "Wash, and be clean; " overlooking the fact that owing to the corruption of our nature, and the alienation of our hearts, that which is described as so very simple, becomes in practice the hardest thing imaginable.

We may also bear in mind that there are many passages which speak of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hid in Christ, which represent the Saviour as the power of God and the wisdom of God, which teach us that into the mystery of redeeming love even angels desire to look. How are we to reconcile this language with the simplicity that is in Christ?

A glance at the context in the original will show the real meaning of the words. St. Paul says (2 Cor. xi. 2.), "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy,"-with a jealousy inspired by God-with a sensitiveness for the divine honour and glory—"for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; but I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty," thus your minds, your understandings and sentiments should be corrupted from your singleness of affection The word ἀπλότης denotes singleness of towards Christ. purpose, integrity, generosity, impartiality; it marks that openness and sincerity of heart which repudiates duplicity in thought or action. There is no idea of simplicity in the ordinary use of the word, except the expression of his desire that the Corinthians should remain simple concerning evil, simple in respect of any attachment which might seduce them from the singleness of devotion, the undivided affection and homage due to Christ. This interpretation so commends itself from its harmony with the context as to render subsidiary arguments quite superfluous. I would however, remind the critical student that some MSS. insert another word, suggested, perhaps, by the expression, "as a chaste virgin," and thus the passage might be rendered, lest your thoughts should be corrupted from your singleness of devotion and your chastity towards Christ. Christianity, says Archdeacon Wordsworth, is the marriage of the soul to Christ as the single object of affection, and is distinguished from the spiritual polygamy of heathenism and the spiritual fornication of heresy.

· According to this interpretation we may affirm that these words which have passed into a proverb, are misapplied universally. A new and more forcible meaning is extracted from the passage which is involved in the illustration employed. The language of St. Paul is in perfect harmony with the prophets who represent unfaithfulness to the old covenant as spiritual adultery. The jealousy of Paul carries out the teaching of the Baptist (John. iii. 28, 29), "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom," &c. Any one who thinks of competing with the husband for a share in the affections of the bride, is guilty of the basest effrontery and most abominable turpitude. The friend of the bridegroom may rejoice that he is received into a near, intimate, and honourable relation, but the paranymph can never think of claiming the inalienable privileges of the bridegroom. were an iniquity to be abhorred of all. What a proof does it give of the versatility and subtlety of Satan, that the Church Universal, or any branch thereof, that any human system or organization should claim a share in the devotion which we owe to our living Lord and glorified Head! Who is Paul. and who is Apollos? Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

SAUL OF TARSUS FALLING BEFORE JESUS OF NAZARETH.

"And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"—Acts xxii. 8.

This remarkable verse presents to us four great general truths.

I. THAT MAN IS THE OB-JECT OF DIVINE INSPECTION. Though Christ was now in heaven, yet his eye followed Saul on his way to Damascus. Little did Saul know that He whom he hated, whose disciples he sought to destroy, and whose name he endeavoured to blot from the earth, knew all about him—not only marked his every footstep, but saw his

every passing thought and feeling. That the great God knows all about the life and conduct of the individual man is obvious, First. From the omniscience of Hisnature. He who sees all things, sees each thing-the minute as well as the vast. Secondly: From the history of mankind-Hagar in the wilderness, Jacob at Bethel, Elijah in the cave, and now Saul on his way to Damascus. Thirdly: From the teachings of the Bible. (See Psalmcxxxix.; Prov. xv. 3.; Heb. iv. 13.) solemn fact should make us serious, circumspect, devout.

IL THAT CHRIST IS THE ORIGINATOR OF MORAL RE-FORMATION. What now gave the turning-point to Paul's life? The manifestation of Christ in the "light," the "voice," the address. "Saul, Saul," &c. Conversion does not originate with self; nor with the agency of man outside. but always with Christ. It is a resurrection. Who can raise the dead but He? It is a creation. Who can create but He! This fact agrees, First: With the consciousness of the good. The good everywhere, involuntarily, ascribe their goodness to Him. This is the burden of heaven's anthem. Second: This agrees with the teachings of Scripture. "Of his own will begat he us," &c. "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me." &c.

III. THAT HUMILITY IS THE CONDITION OF HEAVENLY COM-When did Saul MUNION. hear the voice of Jesus? When was his soul put en; rapport with the Divine mind? When he had fallen to the ground. Humility implies a deep sense of need, and without that sense the soul will never open its eye or its ear to the Divine. must take off the shoes from. our feet, like Moses-fall to the dust like Isaiah-smits our breast, like the publican, if we would hear what God. has to say. "Unto that man will I look who is of a broken spirit," &c.

IV. THAT UNION CHRIST IS THE PRIVILEGE OF THE GOOD. "Why persecutest; thou ME?" What does this: Personally, Christ was in the heavens, beyond the reach of mortals. means that so dear are his disciples to his heart, that their sufferings are His. Her bears their infirmities, and carries their sorrows, even in They are "members of his body," and no part can be wounded without: quivering to the sensorium. (See Matt. xxv. 40, 45.) "Inasmuch as ye have done it to: the least of these," &c.

THE DIVINE ORDINATION OF MAN TO THE HIGHEST LIFE ON EARTH.

"And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."—Acts xxii. 14, 15.

verb, THE προεχειρίσατο, which is here translated. "chosen," only occurs in this form in one other place in the New Testament. (Acts xxvi. 16), where it has the sense of "making," or "appointing." The idea here is ordination, or setting apart. Ananias tells Paul that the God of their fathers had ordained him to the life specified in these verses. And truly the life is one of the highest that man can live What is the ordion earth. It isnation?

I. To AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HIGHEST SUBJECT. "That thou shouldest know his will." God has a will. A will in relation to all existences—a will in relation to every individual man. will is at once the spring of all existence, the rule of all motion, the standard of all character. To understand it is to understand the philosophy of all being, the cause of all phenomena, and the science of all duty. All true subjects of thought are related to it, and lead into it as radia to their centre. It is, therefore, the sublimest subject of thought. It expresses the divine nature, it reveals the universe. It is, therefore, the great theme for the study of eternity. To the study of this Paul was thus ordained, He began it then, he is at it now, he will continue at it for ever.

II. To a vision of the HIGHEST EXISTENCE. see that Just One." Not only to understand the will which is the law of the universe. but to see the Lawgiver Himself. "That Just One." Who ? Evidently the Messiah-the God-man. Acts iii. 14.) He is called "that Just One" not merely because, as God, he is absolutely just, the Fountain of eternal rectitude. Nor merely because, as man, he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." But as Mediator who has engaged to make unjust men just. His work as mediator is to make a world of unjust men just to themselves, just to their fellows, just to the universe. just to God. This is his work. and his work exclusively. Hence he is designated "that Just One." Paul was ordained to see Him. First . To renovate him as a sinner. The vision of Christ is the soul-transforming force! "Be-

holding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed," &c. Second: To qualify him as an apostle. It would seem that one of the necessary qualifications of an apostle was, that he should have a personal view of Christ. Hence he says, "Am I not an apostle; have I not seen Christ our Lord ?" Thirdly: To consummate his blessedness as a man. What is the heaven of souls? beatific vision of Christ. The sight of Him thrills all, brightens all, elevates all, enraptures all. (Rev. v. 6, 12.)

· III. To a reception of the COMMUNICATIONS. "And shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." To have a direct communication with Christ seemed necessary in order to put Paul on a level with the twelve apostles. (Acts xiii. 3; Galatians i. 1.) But whilst this was specially required for Paul as an apostle, it is a high privilege to which God "hath chosen," or appointed all good men. And what a privilege! teaches like Christ? "Never man spake like this man." So they said who heard Him when on earth, when he spoke only the few things that they could bear. His words on earth were original, suggestive, soul inspiring. But to listen to that voice in Heaven, what an ecstasy of joy! Every utterance of that voice will then dispel some cloud of mystery from the sky of spirits, and open up some new realm of thought to the intellect, some new domain of beauty to the imagination. What is the voice of your Platos or even of your Pauls compared to the voice of Christ? The glimmerings of rushlight to the light of day.

IV. To A DISCHARGE OF THE HIGHEST MISSION. What work was He chosen to? "Thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard." First: To bear witness of the highest facts about the Greatest Being. Paul was appointed as a witness for Christ. He was to declare all that he knew from observation and experience concerning the Son of This he nobly did. Second: To bear witness of the highest facts about the Greatest Being, to all mankind. "Unto all men." To the Jew as well as to the Gentile.

Oh, brothers! be "ordained" to such a life as this. How earnestly should we aspire to such an ordination!

GETTING RID OF SIN.

[&]quot;And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the

name of the Lord."—Acts xxii.
16.
The narrative in the ninth chapter records the execution of this proposition but not

of this proposition but not the proposition itself. Here Ananias calls upon Saul to be baptized; there we are told that after he had received his sight "he arose and was baptized." The discrepancy here is not contradictory, but supplementary. The words suggest three remarks concerning the work of getting rid of sin. It is a possible, a praying, and an urgent work.

I. It is a Possible work. "Be baptized and wash away thy sins." The Holy Word represents the sinful state of the soul under different figures. Sleep, slavery, disease, death, pollution. Here pollution the words imply that it is a cléansable pollution. not ingrained. It is a something separable from the soul. It can be washed away. Baptism to Saul, would not only be, what it ever was, the ordinance by which men passed from one religion to another. but would symbolize that moral cleansing of the soul which he so deeply needed. No water, of course, can wash the soul; all the waters of the Atlantic could not cleanse one moral stain. There is. however, a spiritual water, "the truth as it is in Jesus, by which the Eternal Spirit does cleanse." (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Titus iii. 7; Eph. v. 25, 26; Rev. i. 5, 6; vii. 14.) Thank God it is possible on this earth to separate the sin from the sinner.

II. It is a PRAYING WORK. "Calling upon the name of the Lord." The correcter reading seems to be "calling on his name "-αῦτοῦν rather than kupiôu. Christ's name, however, is Himself; to call upon his name is to call upon Him. First: Christ is the only cleanser of human souls. His work is to wash away the sins of the world. To purify the moral garments of humanity. To make them white "without spot, wrinkle," &c. Secondly: Prayer is the ordained means of attaining his cleansing influence. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." (Rom. x. 13.) The prayer addressed to Him in the upper-room at Jerusalem, brought down his cleansing influences on the day of Pentecost, You may get wealth by industry; intelligence by study; wisdom by experience; but moral purity only by prayer. Prayer takes the soul up to the fountain opened for the washing away of all uncleanness.

III. It is an URGENT work. "Why tarriest thou?" Or

more literally, why art thou about acting, instead of acting really? Do not hesitate a moment. Be prompt. What thou doest, do quickly. importance of promptitude may be argued-First: From the greatness of the work. Eternity depends upon it. Second: From the time already lost. The whole life should have been given to it, but much has run to waste. Third: From the increase of difficulties. Disinclination. insensibility, force of habit, increase. Fourth: From the character of the future. is (1) brief; (2) uncertain.

A COMMON THING REACHING THE WONDERFUL.

"While I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance."—Acta xxii. 17. I. HERE IS A COMMON THING. A man praying. Prayer is the an instinct of Danger seldom fails to rouse this instinct into the passionate supplication even of the most depraved (see Psa. cvii. 13). Volney in a storm at sea, a striking example of this. Alas! more than half the prayers of the world are worthless. All worthless prayer may be divided into two classes. First: Prayer addressed to the wrong god. Second: Prayer addressed to the right God in a wrong way. The universal tendency of man to pray implies the oul's innate belief in some of the leading facts of theology, such as the being, the personality, the presence, and the entreatability of God.

II. Here is a common THING REACHING THE WON-DERFUL. The trance, EKOTAGIS, is the state in which a man has passed out of the usual order of his life, beyond the usual limits of conscious-To this ness and volition. "ecstasy" of the Apostle Paul we owe the mission which was the starting-point of the history of the universal Church, the command which bade him "depart far hence unto the Gentiles." supposed by some, and with much probability, that it is to this trance Paul refers (2 Cor. xii. 1-5) when he speaks of being caught up to the third heaven. Now. it was prayer, a common thing, that conducted Paul into this wonderful state of ecstasy.

Conclusion.—First: Learn the sublime possibilities of the human soul. By a mysterious power of abstraction it can close up all the physical senses, shut out the external universe, and transport itself as on the wings of an angel into a world where there are scenes too grand for description, and communications surpassing utterance. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John, as well as Paul,

were often transported to these supernal states. Second: Learn the incomparable worth of true prayer. It was while Paul was praying that he got into this trance. Prayer is the road into the celestial. While Daniel was praying,

the man Gabriel touched him about the time of evening oblation, and said, "O, Daniel," &c. (Dan. ix. 21— 23.) While Peter was praying on the housetop, he fell into ecstasy, and a man stood, &c. (Acts x. 9, &c.)

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

LABOUR AS ENHANCING THE RE-LATIVE VALUE OF A MAN'S POSSESSION.

"The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious."—Prov. xii. 27.

THE original word here translated "slothful," is in several other rendered " deceitful." Slothfulness is almost necessarily connected with deceit. The idle man is a dreamer; he lives in false hopes. He makes promises that prove fallacious, because he has not the industry to work them out. Slothfulness stands almost always nearly akin to falsehood. The text means one of three things. First: Either that the slothful man is too lazy to "roast" and to prepare for food what he happened to strike down without much effort in the field. secondly: That which he "roasts" and prepares for food he had no hand in procuring, and that he lives on the production of other men's labours. He has "roast" meat, but that which he roasts is not what he himself took in hunting. Or thirdly: That what he caught in the field was so easily caught, caught with such little effort, that he did not value it enough to prepare for food:—He did not take it up, carry it home and prepare it for the table. The last, I think, was the idea that Solomon had in his mind when he wrote this text. The last clause indicates this: "But the substance of a diligent man is precious," as if he had said, The slothful man does not value sufficiently what he has without labour caught in the field to prepare for food; but what the industrious man has, as the result of his work, is precious to The general principle, therefore, contained in these words is this: - That labour enhances the relative valus of a man's possession. This principle is capable of extensive illustration; it applies to many things.

I. IT APPLIES TO MATERIAL WEALTH. Two men may possess property of exactly the same amount, of exactly the same intrinsic and marketable value, but whilst the one has gained it by long years of industry, it has come to the other by accident or fortune, or in some way entirely irrespective of his labour. Is the property equally appreciated by these two men? Is there not an immense

difference in the value attached to it by its different proprietors? Yes; it is a very different thing to him who has got it by work to what it is to him who has fallen into possession of it without any labour or anxiety.

II. IT APPLIES TO SOCIAL POSI-TION. One man is born to social influence; he becomes the centre of an influential circle, and gets a position of extensive power, with no effort but that which is involved in a small amount of mental culture. He is a country squire; he is a member of Parliament; he is a peer of the realm; and all rather by what is called fortune than by anxious and persevering toil. The other man gets to such positions by long years of arduous and indefatigable labour. Are these positions of the same value? the eyes of the world they are of the same worth, but to these men they are vastly different things.

III. IT APPLIES TO CIVIL LIBERTY. Civil liberty IS AN INVALUABLE POSSESSION. It is the grandest theme of political philosophy; it is the ideal of patriotic poetry; it is the goal in the race of nations. But what a different thing it is to the men, who have just won it by struggle, bloodshed, and sacrifice, to what it is to those who, like us, the modern men of England, have come into it as an inheritance!

IV. IT APPLIES TO RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES. To have the right to form our own religious convictions, and to express them freely and fully; to worship our own God in our own way, what a priceless boon is this! Yet do we value it as those who gained it after long years of persecution and battle? Thus it is that labour enhances the value of our possessions.

"Weave, brothers, weave! Toil is ours; But toil is the lot of man; One gathers the fruits, one gathers the flowers,
One soweth the seed again!

One soweth the seed again!
There is not a creature from England's

To the peasant that delves the soil,

That knows half the pleasure the sea-

sons bring,
If he have not his share of toil."

BARRY CORNWALL.

THE TRUE PATHWAY OF SOULS.

"In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."—Prov. xii. 28.

The life of souls is a journey beginning at the first voluntary thought, and running on from stage to stage through interminable ages. Wonderful pilgrimage is the pilgrimage of souls! What is the true pathway of souls? This is the grand question of being.

I. It is a righteous path-WAY. The way of righteousness." What is the righteous way? The way that the righteous God has marked out. Nothing can be more axiomatic than this, that the path that the great Proprietor and Creator of souls has marked out is the right path, and the only right path. The path of "righteousness" is, First: The path in which His character is the supreme attraction of souls. In the true pathway all the affections of the soul run after Him as rivers to the ocean. is always the grand object before the eye, filling the horizon, and brightening all the scenes through which they pass. Secondly: His will is the supremerule. Wherever that will lead is the path of righteousness. His will is revealed in different forms of expressions. For example: "This is the will of God, that ye believe on his Son." Again: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

The true pathway of souls is—
II. A BLESSED PATHWAY. In the way of righteousness is life;

the buy

and in the pathway thereof is no death.

First: In this pathway is life. The highest—mental—social, and religious life. Secondly: In this pathway is life only. "There is no death." No death of any kind, no decay of faculties, no waning of hopes, no wreck of purposes, no loss of friendships. Each traveller steps on in the buoyant energy of immortal youth through lovely Edens of unfading life.

THE TEACHABLE AND THE UN-

"A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."—Prov. xiii. 1.

I. THE TEACHABLE SON. "A wise son heareth his father's instruction." Solomon, of course, supposes that the father is what a father ought to be. There are men sustaining the paternal relationship who can scarcely be called fathers. They have not the fatherly instincts, the fatherly love, the fatherly wisdom, the fatherly royalty. A son would scarcely be wise in listening to men of this class. When we are commanded to honour our father, and to honour the king, it is always supposed that the father and the king are honour-worthy, and realize, to some extent, the ideal of the relationship. He who attends to the instruction of a father, Solomon says, is wise. He is wise, First: Because he attends to the Divine condition of human improvement. The Creator has ordained that the rising generation should get its wisdom from the teachings of its parents. It is by generations learning of its predecessors, that the race ad-Secondly: Because he vances. gratifies the heart of his best earthly friend. The counsels of a true father are always sincere, dictated by the truest love, and intended to serve the interests of his children, and nothing is more gratifying to his paternal nature than to see them rightly attended to.

II. The UNTRACHABLE SON. "A scorner heareth not rebuke." Scorn is derision, contempt, and may be directed either to a person or a thing. It is not necessarily a wrong state of mind, its moral character, good or otherwise, depends upon the person or thing to which it is directed. Some persons justly merit derision; some things merit contempt. son who scorns either the person or the counsels of his father, is not in a state of mind to hear rebuke The son he is unteachable. who has got to scorn the character and counsels of a worthy father has reached the last degree of depravity, and passed beyond the pale of parental instruction: -"The sport of ridicule and of detraction Turns every virtue to its bordering fault,

And never gives to Truth and Merit that Which simpleness and true desert should purchase. SHAKESPEARE.

MAN SPEAKING.

"A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence. He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."—Prov. xiii. 2, 3.

I. THE SELF-PROFITING AND Here SELF-RUINOUS IN SPEECH. we have, First: The self-profiting in speech. "A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth." speech of a good man which is enlightened, truthful, pure, generous, is of service to himself in many ways. By it :--(1.) He promotes the development of his own spritual being. (2.) He gratifies his own moral nature. (3.) He produces in hearers results which are delightful to his own observation; thus "he eats good by the fruit of his mouth." Here we have, Secondly: The self-ruinous in speech. "The soul of the transgressors shall eat violence." The corrupt speech of the ungodly is a violence to reason, conscience, social propriety. The sinful tongue of the transgressor, of all violent weapons, inflicts the most violent injuries on his own nature.

II. THE SELF-CONTROLLED AND THE SELF-RECKLESS IN SPRECH. First: Controlled speech may be useful. "He that keepeth his uscful. mouth, keepeth his life." The tongue is a member that requires controlling. Passion and impulse are constantly stimulating it to action. Hence the importance of it being properly "bridled;" held firmly by the reins of reason. Secondly: Reckless speech may be "He that openeth dangerous. wide his lips shall have destruction." Who can tell the evils that a lawless tongue has done in the world? One spark from it has often kindled conflagrations. (James iii. 8, 9.) "If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." "Give not thy tongue," says Quarles. "too great a liberty, lest it take thee prisoner. A word unspoken is, like the sword in the scabbard, thine; if vented, thy sword is in another's hand. If thou desire to be held wise, be so wise as to hold thy tongue." "Set a watch. O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!"

SOUL CRAVING.

"The soul of the sluggard desireth, and bath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."—Prov. xiii. 4.

These words suggest.—

I. THAT SOUL GRAVING IS COM-MON TO ALL. Both the soul of the sluggard and the diligent

"desire." Souls have a hunger as well as bodies, and the hunger of the soul is a much more serious thing. You may see physical hunger depicted in the wretched looks of those who crowd the alleys of St. Giles, and you may see the hunger of souls depicted on the faces of those that roll in their chariots of opulence through Rotten-row. What is the ennui that makes miserable the rich but the unsatisfied hunger of the soul. First: The hunger of the soul as well as the hunger of the body implies the existence of food somewhere. Secondly: The unsatisfied hunger of the soul as well as the body is painful and ruinous.

II. Soul CRAVING CAN BE ALLAYED ONLY BY LABOUR. "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Charity, or accident, or fortune may allay the physical hunger of man, may make fat even the sluggard's body; but personal labour, diligent effort, is essential to allay the hunger of the soul. Men must labour before they can get the soul's true bread. There must be the sowing, the cultur-ing, the reaping, and the threshing by the individual man in order to get hold of that bread which can make fat the soul. Spiritually, I cannot live on the produce of other men.

MORAL TRUTHFULNESS.

"A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame. Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner."—Prov. xiil, 5, 6.

I. MORAL TRUTHFULNESS IS AN INSTINCT TO THE RIGHTBOUS. "A righteous man hateth lying." A soul that has been made right in relation to the laws of its own spiritual being to the universe and to God, has an instinctive

repugnance to falsehood. A righthearted man cannot be false in speech or life. "He hates lying." The prayer of his soul is, "Remove me from the way of lying! and grant me thy law graciously.

(Psalm exix. 29.)

II. Moral truthfulness is a SAFEGUARD AGAINST EVIL. evils specified in these two verses in connection with the wicked must be regarded as kept off from the righteous by his moral truthfulness. This, indeed, seems implied. What are the evils here implied connected with falsehood? First: Loathsomeness. "A wicked man is loathsome." A liar is an unlovely and an unloveable object: he is detestable ; he attracts none ; he repels all. Secondly: Shame.

He "cometh to shame." A liar either in lip, or life, or both, must come to shame. A rigorous destiny will strip off his mask, and leave him exposed, a hideous hypocrite, to the scorn of men and angels. Thirdly: Destruction. "Wickedness overthroweth the sinner." Inevitable destruction is the doom of the false. They have built their houses on the sand of fiction, and the storms of reality will lay them in ruins.

From all these evils, moral truthfulness guards the righteous. His truthfulness guards him against the loathsome, the disgraceful, and the ruinous :-

"An honest man's the noblest work of

Theological Hotes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

THE GREAT PROPITIATION.

Replicant.—In answer to Querist No. 16, p. 352, Vol. XVII., and continued from p. 56, Vol. XX.

A further note on the explanation of the atonement of Christ by the theory of debt.

Calvinists are very partial to this theory. The difference, according to their theory, between saint and sinner, saved and lost, is that the account of the one is cancelled, settled, or paid by the surety, and the other's debt remains undischarged, and hence his punishment is sure. We may, therefore, imagine a bill to this effect:

John Bunyan, Debtor to God. To all defects of nature on account of Adam's sin To personal shortcomings after conversion, or negation of good in deed, word, and thought To positive evil work, and word, and thought, before conversion To all acts, &c., of evil since conversion

For all positive evil, or breach of Divine law, punishment must be inflicted. For all negation of good, or lack of positive righteousness, some other righteousness must be given. The pain (3p)and the righteousness (r) have been fully paid by Christ, man's According to the Calsurety. vinistic theory, our Lord paid all for the elect by name, as John. Bunyan, and paid nothing for the non-elect; therefore are the elect free from all obligation to God, and their salvation, as far as God is concerned, is of mere justice, and in no sense of mercy, while the salvation of the non-elect always has been, and ever must be impossible, they being unable to meet the liabilities of the bill, and having no friend to pay the sum required. According to the view of those who believe in a universal atenement, the bill is cancelled for every man, and God, therefore, cannot in any case, with justice, demand a second payment.

Let us now consider:

II. The atonement of Christ as explained by the theory of compensation.

This theory is but a slight modification of the theory of debt. The only point of difference being that in the latter our Lord is supposed to give to God an exact equivalent for benefits conferred upon sinners, while in the former a general compensation only is given; and those theologians who adopt this theory find it very convenient to leave that Man, compensation undefined. they say, having sinned, has forfeited all good by disobedience, and it would be impossible for God to bestow any good upon him now that he is a sinner, without seeming to sanction sin, unless he received an equivalent or was in some way—nobody knows how -compensated, not for the injury done to his character and government by individual sinners. but by sin absolutely, without any reference to names or numbers. In consequence of this compensation, though no one pretends to say what it was, or how it answered its purpose, the Divine Being is at liberty without making light of sin, to bestow any favour on sinners. He, therefore, bestows upon some of them spiritual influences to make them believe, and gives them eternal life for doing what they could not refuse to do. That is the Calvinistic view of it. The Noncalvinistic theory regards the divine influence as sufficient only to make it possible for man to believe, in spite of his evil propensities, and not as sufficent to annihilate the free agency of believers.

This theory requires (1.) The separation of God and Christ, as it would be absurd to talk of one compensating himself. person This theory (2.) Makes salvation of right and not of grace, and renders the punishment of the wicked impossible, for if a man were robbed, and afterwards received compensation and a acknowledged it satisfactory, he would have no longer any moral right to proscecute the evil doer. (3.) If the compensation be a full equivalent, as in the case of the atonement it is supposed to be, then is there no room for forgiveness.

The great fundamental objection to this theory of explanation is this, (4.) That if it was impossible for God to bestow upon the sinner the smallest gift without compensation, it was surely impossible for Him to bestow his greatest gift—his only Son—without compensation. It is, however, supposed that God could give, and actually did give his Son or self for man's good without any compensation.

whatever. If this was possible, I ask the unsophisticated reader, why could He not give, on the same terms, freely and without compensation, any other smaller gift? Why not give full pardon or eternal life on condition of true repentance?

As I gave in 1862 an elaborate mathematical analysis of this theory in Homilist, Vol. iv., Second series, p. 102, it is not necessary to discuss it any further here.

Gallieo.

(To be continued.)

Literary Aotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end, Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE LIFE AND LIGHT OF MAN. An Essay. By John Young, LL.D. Alexander Strahan, London and New York.

We should like amazingly to see an intelligent, searching, vigorous, and thoroughly independent book on modern theological hereticsthat is, heretics in relation to the standards which the popular teachers of religion have set up. Such a book would contain not only names that have been sadly slandered by contemporary bigots, but names representing the greatest scholars, the profoundest thinkers, and the most Christ-loving men. We should have such names as Dr. Pye Smith, Dr. Arnold, Archbishop Whately, Dr. Bushnell, Robertson, of Brighton, John Foster, Thomas Binney, F. Maurice, and many others, including the distinguished author of the work before us. And in what does the heresy of such men consist? Simply in thisin making the Scriptures of God rather than the systems of men, the standard of their faith. "My heterodoxy," says Archbishop Whately, " consists chiefly in waiving a good many subtle questions, agitated by various 'anes' and 'ites' and 'ists,' and in keeping clear of sundry metaphysical distinctions relative to the mode of existence of the Divine and the human mind, which are beyond my comprehension, and which I am disposed to think would have been brought down to the level of it by Scripture, had they been necessary points of a saving faith." The work before, us touches the most vital questions in Christian theology, and contains views in direct antagonism to many of those set forth by the preachers and the authors who arrogate to

themselves the title of "Evangelical." As Evangelical opinions are not evangelical truths, Dr. Young's conclusions are not necessarily erroneous on this account. By the Scripture he must be tried, and by its decisions he is manifestly prepared to abide. Though we cannot say we agree with all his propositions, we greatly admire the honesty, ability, and reverence with which they are presented. We heartily commend the work to the candid investigation of all who aspire to the work of expounding the Holy Book of God.

THE CHURCH AS ESTABLISHED IN ITS RELATIONS WITH DISSENT. By Rev. J. CLARK, M.A. London: Rivingtons, Waterloo-place.

THE HOMILIST knows nothing of Church or Dissent, and takes no interest whatever in the squabbles of ecclesiastical parties. Nonconformity may, in the eye of a mere Churchman, be a very contemptible thing, but to him who studies the revelation of Christ in the light of reason and conscience, in its relations to universal man, and to that eternity which engulphs in a few short years a whole generation, with its kings, princes, generals, judges, bishops, clergymen and dissenting ministers, the "Church of England," as it is called, is rather an insignificant thing—a thing not worth battling for. We feel, therefore, but little interest in such works as the one before us. Dr. Clark is obviously an able man, a vigorous writer, and his work will not fail to awaken an interest in ecclesiastical partisans.

A SUGGESTIVE COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, ON AN ORIGINAL PLAN. St. Luke. Vol. I. By Rev. U. H. VAN DOREN. London: R. D. Dickinson, 92, Farringdon-street.

This is a work very much after our own heart. It answers well to its name. Though its Greek is not always accurate, and its theological leanings are rather too strong in some cases, it is pre-eminently suggestive, and this to us is the most priceless element in any such work. Its brief critical notes, gathered from our best exegetes, are numerous, lucid, and apt. They strike their light directly on the text. The author's annotations are in the main admirable. They are all pith and point; there is not a waste word; and many of his homiletic points, expressed in a sentence or two, are suggestive of enough to bring up sermons to fertile souls. We heartily commend the book.

MEMORIALS OF CHARLES MARCH, COMMANDER, R.N. By his Nephew, SEPTIMUS MARCH, B.A. London: James Nisbet, 21, Bernersstreet.

WE once had the pleasure of an interview with Captain March some ten years ago, in the city of Gloucester. His modest bearing, frank expression, social glow, and regal head, so won our sympathies, that memory has frequently reproduced his image to our mind. The picture in the book agrees well with the image as it has floated in our imagination, and agrees also with the masterly delineation which his talented nephow, in the opening page of this biography, has given. This work is interesting for many reasons. It records many exciting incidents and noble actions in the life of Captain March; it contains not a few wise reflections, and admirable sketches of scenes and characters. It is also written with rare ability. The author is young; it is the first time we have met him in the literary vineyard, and we give him a hearty welcome. One who can write so well, will find much to do in the world of letters, and we shall be glad to meet him soon again.

THE DRAYTONS AND THE DAVENANTS. A Story of the Civil Wars. By the Author of "Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family." London: T. Nelson and Sons.

This is a story of English life in the seventeenth century. The two families, who are the subjects of it, are respectively partisans of Oliver Cromwell and that poor foolish king Charles I. The social life and the effects of the contests of the time are revealed in the incidents of the tale: and an insight is afforded into the characters of the Royalist and Independent. Those who know the former works of this writer will not require our assurance that this, like those, is very well performed. Those who have not that knowledge, and are interested in this subject, and in its fiction, may take our assurance that they will find profitable entertainment in "The Draytons and the Davenants."

THE STORY OF JESUS IN VERSE. By EDWIN HODDER. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder.

RHYMES of all compositions are the most rememberable; hence he who has the faculty of putting divine facts and ideas in good rhyme has one of the highest qualifications for scriptural instruction. The biography of Christ is the history of histories; it is the Bible of man. It reveals, begets, nurtures, and perfects the highest life. The author has essayed to throw this wondrous life into rhymthical sentences. The conception is good, the aim ambitious, and the result is far more satisfactory than we anticipated when we first took the work in our hands. In sooth we deem it a success. Whilst the wondrous facts are told with historic accuracy, they pass before the eye in forms of much poetic beauty, and fall on the ear in sounds of melody that will long ring in memory.

THE GRIMSHAW STREET CHAPEL PULPIT. By the Rev. Evan Lewis, B.A.

THE preacher in large towns whose sermons will bear printing, may
preach to thousands, instead of hundreds, and we sincerely wish that

numbers who have the qualification (would they were more numerous) would do so. Mr. Lewis is qualified for this in a very high degree. He has rich stores of information, a great power of vigorous and independent thought, and an imagination ever ready to bring his facts into new combinations, and paint them in new colours. He knows also how to use his pen. He can transfer to paper the rare things of his intellect and heart. These are two admirable sermons.

CITY LIFE. A Sermon. By Rev. Thomas Stephenson. London Printed by John King and Co., 63, Queen Street, Cheapside. This is in every way a beautiful discourse: thoughts, style, paper, and type all extremely good.

Short Motices.

THE MIRACLE OF THE CRUCIFIXION. By the Rev. George Cron. Belfast. Glasgow: T. D. Monson, 6, Bath-street. A very telling discourse on a most stirring subject by an able man. - THE REAL PRESENCE. By T. Wilson Coombs, B.A. London: Jackson, Walford. A very sensible lecture, truthful, pithy, and pointed.—Soothing THOUGHTS. By the Rev. N. T. Langridge. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster-row. A sermon admirably suited to quiet the troubled thoughts of those whom death has bereaved of beloved friends.-PRAYING TO CHRIST. A Reply to Bishop Colenso. By C. Schwartz, D.D. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster-row. An able and, as we think, a satisfactory reply to a modern heresy. --- Human Immor-TALITY. By William Mellon. London: J. Burns. Progressive Library. Here we have many beautiful thoughts mixed up with much nonsense. — COMB AND SEE. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co. Paternoster-row. This is a very little volume, big with great truths .- THE WORD OF LIFE. John Macmillan, Glasgow. These tracts are a collection of Scripture passages illustrative of leading Gospel truths. We like the idea much. A telling page of Scripture put into the hands of a thoughtless man is perhaps more likely to be read than any other tract, and, we think, more likely to be useful. THE MINER'S WELCOME. By Albert Barnes. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., Paternoster-row. Admirable tracts for distribution.



AHOMILY

ON

Simeon, an Old Model for Modern Men.

"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."—Luke it. 25—32.

N the life of man, the religious element is by far the most important. It gives to his history, worth, unity, loveliness, and immortality. Of the general history of Simeon we know little or nothing; but of his religious one there is a full, pathetic, and an instructive description given in the narrative which I have just read. Its presiding principles and its chief aspects are here beautifully unfolded.

The text gives a brief but comprehensive account of Simeon, his personal piety; his public spirit, and the glory of his latter end.

VOL. XX.

I. THE PERSONAL EXCELLENCE OF SIMEON. It is expressed in the 25th verse:—"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout." These are the two grand elements of religion, rectitude and devoutness. He was eminent in the two great relationships of his being. Towards God he was devout; towards man he was just. This part of the subject needs but a brief application: a few suggestive hints, however, may be useful. It is important to study the distinction between these two primary attributes of human holiness—the diversities and inequalities which mark their development—yet their essential union; and, finally, the necessity for the joint, harmonious, vigorous activity of both, in order to constitute perfection of character. A word, then, on each of these points.

Who is the devout man? The answer is brief. It is the man who, in consequence of inward, spiritual illumination, entertains correct views of God—of God's nature, character, government, worship, and grace; and who habitually feels, acts, and lives under the living influence of these views. It is the man who has respect to God in all things, who inherits and exhibits the moral glories of the great Father, walks inserence fellowship with him in a world of storms, and lives and moves in his everlasting love. The devout man prays to his God in secret, makes His book the reason and rule of duty, leans upon His kind arm when sorrows darken his path, and endeavours everywhere and always to glorify his name.

But Simeon was not only devout but also just. And who is the just man? The scriptural idea of him is vast and comprehensive. Without aiming at an exact definition, or even description, I would say that the just man is one who comprehends the moral relationships in which he is placed, who studies the various duties which spring from these relationships, who aims to fulfil these duties by the grace of God, and who moreover endeavours to bring others to do the same things. A just man is one who is universally right—right as to his condition, and right as to his character. His faith,

his principles, his practice, are all right. Having accepted the divine method of salvation, he is treated as though he were just; the "Lord imputeth no iniquity to him." Having received the Divine Spirit, he is become actively just towards himself, his race, and his God. In law he is righteous: in life he is righteous.

Such is the general idea the Bible gives of a "just man." But, in the text, the phrase has evidently a limited signification. It denotes social rectitude. To be just to our fellow men is to recognise, and, as far as we can, to protect their rights, civil, mental, religious. It is to treat them, in deed, word and feeling, according to the spirit of our relations to them. It is to love them as ourselves: to do to them as we would that they should do to us. It is, in a word, to study, practice, defend, and diffuse universal justice. This is to be just; and to be just is an essential element of true religion.

Now, between these distinct virtues there is an essential connection. They never do, they never can, exist separately. Strictly speaking, they are only two manifestations of the same thing. It is human holiness embracing at once the finite and the infinite as the spheres of its action. Men would sever devotion and morality; but the thing is impossible. Facts as well as philosophy prove it so. How can a truly devout man be unjust? And how can a just man be yet so unjust as to neglect his God? The two virtues, we speak of necessarily co-exist. The combination is required by God and expected by men. False must be the devotion of the unjust: partial and precarious must be the rectitude of the prayerless.

But although these two qualities never exist independently of each other, yet it is a matter of fact, that in many a good man they are far from being equally developed. One man is very devotional as to the current of his thoughts, associations, feelings, hopes, and desires, and yet very defective, to say the least, in the discharge of his social obligations. Another man is remarkably exact, punctual, and conscient

tious in all his relative duties, who nevertheless is, or appears to be, very careless and cold in the offices of devotion and in the higher exercises of religion. How is this? What opinion are we to form of such persons? Would it be right to deny the piety of the one, or of the other, or of both? Certainly not: that would be uncharitable and unjust.

In the history of practical godliness there are four things which it would be well to remember: that different men excel in different virtues; that the same men excel in different virtues at different periods of their history; that in no man do all the virtues shine with equal radiance; and, finally, that the best of men are far from perfection here. These are well-known truths; but sometimes we act as if it were not so. The habitual recollection of them is a duty; it will help us to form a just estimate of human character, promote our charitableness, and make us long for the perfections of the higher world.

Thus we have glanced at the virtues of Simeon; their nature, development, and mutual relation. In him they shone beautifully and harmoniously. His love to God produced universal propriety of conduct towards men; and that is what I would call true religion.

II. I now proceed to notice THE PUBLIC SPIRIT OF SIMEON. That is beautifully expressed in these words—"Waiting for the consolation of Israel." He was not only a just and devout man, but he was also waiting for Him who was to be Israel's consolation and glory and the Gentiles' light. Simeon was not a man of a narrow, contracted, selfish mind. Oh, no. His thoughts, desires, solicitudes, and hopes were not limited to himself, nor to his own nation; his heart burned for the public good; he was an observer and interpreter of public events. Through the divine medium of prophecy he surveyed the far-spread scenes of futurity. From the mount of Vision he contemplated the evolutions of Providence, the source and the spread of redemption, the changes and the predestinations of the world—of the universe. He had

long waited for the day of the Lord: at last it sweetly dawned upon his hopes. Faith and prayer ever wait for those eras of light and renewal, by a succession of which God has promised to draw humanity nearer and still nearer Simeon waited for the coming of Messiah: expectation was the habitual attitude of his spirit: it was the theme of his conversation; the breath of his prayers; the bright beam that ever cheered the long path of his pilgrim-In the teachings of the synagogue, in the sacrifices of the temple, in the changes which were passing over the institutions of his people, the devout patriarch saw the prophetic signs of the Son of man. His constant waiting for Christ kept his affections in a state of healthy excitement, spiritualized his piety, shed an unearthly lustre around his general character, and raised him far above the men of his age.

But it may be said that the Jews as a nation, waited for the Messiah. True: they did so. But then we must bear in mind, my brethren, that their expectation was grounded upon a wrong interpretation; a narrow, selfish, secular interpretation—of prophecy; for it was this false interpretation that led them to condemn and crucify as an impostor the true Messiah, the Son of God. They waited for an earthly, political Saviour; one that would crush Rome, fight for the temple, and make Jerusalem the empress of the world. But very different from that were the anticipations of Simeon. He studied universal interests, and studied universal interests in connection with universal and eternal principles. His address in the temple contains a sublime prediction of the personal history and public in-But I can only just glance on it at fluences of Jesus. present, naming some of the principles which it embraces, without attempting to discuss them.

Simeon gives three distinct views of Jesus. He refers to Him as the object of human hostility; as the cause of great moral revolutions; and, finally, as the divine source of spiritual blessings.

First. The text refers to Christ, as an object of human emnity. He was to be a "sign to be spoken against"—the mark of evil men and evil spirits. "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed." He, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame; "for consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." To give a minute account of the sufferings of the Saviour is not necessary on this occasion: the wonderful history of them is written in our Bible-is written in our hearts. It is impossible to think of men's opposition to Jesus—to think of the general and special sources whence it sprang-of the varied forms which it assumed-of the manner in which it was borne-of the extraordinary scenes in which it issued-and of the marvellous bearings which it had on the history of man and the government of God :it is impossible, we say, to think of these things without being instructed and moved. Oh! how they teach us to weep for our race and to cling to the dear cross of our Lord.

Secondly, Simeon pointed to Jesus as the cause of great moral revolutions. He was to be "for the fall and the rising of many in Israel;"-" the thoughts of many hearts were to be revealed." Here two great effects are attributed to the presence of Jesus on earth; a revelation of human thoughts. and a revolution in human affairs. One of the mighty works which Jesus came to accomplish was to set men to think-to think with freedom, earnestness and force; and this He actually did to an extent before unknown. His aim was not to affect the mere surface of our nature, to alter only its moral forms and fashions; but to send its influence down to its very centre. He came to speak to our inner being. to give liberty to thought, to open the doors of its prison, and to show it the path of light. He set mind in motion: he touched the mysterious springs of its power: and this he did by the conjoined influence of two things—his truth and his character. Both these were original, perfect divine.

impulse which he thus imparted to our nature has been deepening and widening ever since. He originated a succession of improving changes, which can no more be stopped than the course of the stars. He broke at once the monotony and the monopoly of religious thinking, opened for it new channels, and made it flow through regions which it had never visited before. There was more thought at work in Palestine during Christ's residence there than ever before. The new leaven soon spread throughout the Roman empire, and became blended with its religions and legislation, its philosophy and literature. The living power of the Gospel, by rousing humanity to action, elicited its true character: opposing elements were set in commotion; the good and the evil rose to the surface; and thus "the thoughts of many hearts were revealed."

Simeon foresaw also that the Holy Child would be "for the fall and rising of many." Here again we meet another wonderful principle—we say principle—for risings and fallings in our world are not mere accidents or chances, but events regulated by a fixed law; and that law is administered by the divine Mediator. We fancy we can see emblems of these moral changes-these risings and fallings-even in the material world. The motions of the heavens—the processes of matter everywhere around us-the revolutions of the seasons-continually remind us of them. This revolutionary principle seems to be in constant operation in the government of our disordered race. It pervades the internal and the external history of humanity: it presides over all the alterations which take place in the ideas, the characters, and the institutions of men. How very remarkably was its energy displayed during the first age of Christianity. Then truth rose higher than it had ever done before: then error and ignorance began to fall; and blessed be God! they have been falling and falling and falling ever since. Then the old schools of religious teachers fell; and a new one rose under the inspirations of Jesus, which is one day to fill the world with its doctrine. Then the first covenant disappeared, to give place to a better one. Then, in a word, the ancient church fell, and the new rose into being; and the rise of this new society was one of the grandest results of Christ's descent to our earth; it was, if we may be allowed the expression, the incarnation of one of the sublimest ideas of the Son of God. What a wonderful society is this;—a society which is based on the social affections and social wants of our renewed nature; which is so simple in its constitution and design as to be adapted equally to all climes and all ages; which requires no qualifications for membership but hatred to sin, confidence in Christ, and good will to men; a society which is destined to receive unborn generations into its bosom, and to fill all worlds with the praises of its Founder. Oh! may the blessedness of belonging to this divine society be ours.

Thirdly: Simeon speaks still more definitely of the Saviour. He represents Him as the source of all spiritual blessings. Three precious gifts, he predicted, would flow from this divine Fountain; light, consolation, and glory. He is the light of men. We have already spoken of Christ as the quickener of mind: we must not forget, however, that the great instrument He employs is truth. "In him was light, and the light was the life of men." The divine light that was in Him broke forth brightly upon the world from every part of his outward history. His doctrine, his miracles, his cross, his grave, were all so many beams of pure light. All the truths which the world needs respecting God, man, salvation, and immortality, are to be found in Christ, and only in Christ. May his Spirit breathe them into our dark hearts, that we may live for ever. Christ is the consolation of men. It is quite unnecessary to spend time in formally proving that Christ is the great, the supreme Consoler—that He is the consolation of our erring, guilty, troubled, anxious race. You know the precious truth; instead, therefore, of enlarging upon it as a theological doctrine, let us turn our heavy hearts to it as our great relief. There is enough here to carry us through; is there not? Let me speak to thee, my dear brother. Is.

thy poor heart deceived, crushed, wounded by sin? are its recollections bitter? are its tendencies too strong for thy sincere but weak resolves? Still for thee there is consolation! Thy sins, which are many, may be yet forgiven: that guilt which rends thy bosom may yet be removed. Tell Him thy feelings; tell Him thy fears; and He will deliver thee yet. He is able to save to the uttermost. Oh! what a consolation is this amid all thy darkness! Dost thou not feel it? Let me speak to thee also, the tempted one. For thee also there is consolation in Christ. Temptation is a part of thy earthly discipline; thy path to the inheritance is through dreary and dangerous deserts: the world now smiling, now frowning, wearies thee: the trifles of life irritate thee: thy senses often conspire against thy soul. Duty is sometimes but a burden. and thy faith in the best things seems like a dream. things fill thy heart with dark misgivings. The long conflict with sin and sorrow disheartens thee; and thou art tempted even to give up thy religion altogether. Is it thus with thee? Yet be not cast down: thy lot is not uncommon. Remember that all are tempted; that even thy Lord was tempted while here: He sympathizes with the tempted still, and throws around them the sufficiency of his grace. Thou brother of Jesus, walk as He walked, and firmly trust in the love that died for thee. Thou wilt soon finish thy course, pass through the mysterious gate of death, and enter the joy of thy Lorda joy dearer for thy present sorrow, and brighter for those clouds that now darken thine earthly path.

Having thus meditated a little on the personal holiness of Simeon, and on his enlarged view of Jesus as the Saviour of the world, let us for a few minutes look at—

III. THE GLORIOUS END OF SIMEON.

First: He was permitted to embrace the holy infant. He had been studying the predictions and types of the law; he had been long waiting for the Wonderful One, to whom they pointed; and now he was blessed with his presence. "Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God." There is

Joseph, there is Mary, there is the holy patriarch, and there is the mysterious babe! Who can describe the joy that was there! Oh! it was a blessed hour! the sweetest, the brightest, that had ever passed over Simeon's heart. As he took the incarnate one into his arms, the sunshine of heaven broke upon his soul; as he pressed Him to his heart, ideas, emotions and beatitudes unutterable at once overwhelmed it like a flood; and before he uttered a word of gratulation to the blessed mother, he turned to God, and breathed his praises there; he blessed God. Oh! there are hours when the heart is too full to speak to any but its God. I am anxious to draw one practical sentiment from this affecting scene, which I may do without breaking the law by which the Scriptures should be expounded. It is just this, - What a dreadful thing it is to see death before we see Christ! See death we all mustwe all shall, and that soon; and, like our departed friend, perhaps unexpectedly. But have we seen Christ? Have we embraced Christ? Have we, by faith, seen the divine grandeur of his person, the transcendent excellence of his character, and the preciousness of his cross, as the medium of pardon and the means of perfection? This is the great question. If we have seen the Saviour, then all will be well; then we shall not be alarmed when illness comes; then we shall be willing to leave the dearest friends we have, to descend the valley of death, and, with a firm step and a song of hope, we shall pass across it to the everlasting fields.

Secondly: He was desirous to die. "Lord," said the happy man, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." This is a comprehensive sentence, and admits of a copious interpretation. But we can only just open it to your devout inspection. See, frst, with what calmness he viewed death. To him, it was only the letting him go—the departing from one place for another, and a better. I have seen, he said, all that is worth seeing in this narrow shadowy sphere; I have seen what I was most anxious to see; now let me be loosed, that I may soar to the world of the blessed. Again: he

viewed his death as being entirely under the control of God. How soothing and sustaining this idea of death. The time, the place, the circumstances of our departure, are all preordained by our Father's love. Child of mortality, child of God! why art thou afraid to die? Already has thy Father fixed the year and the hour when thy earthly sun shall set; the kind ministry that is to watch the closing scene; and even the very spot where thou art to sleep till the morning of the great day. All this has been fixed by Him who knows what is best for us; and who is able to bring it to pass. Let then, thy faith repose in the wise dominion of thy Father over thee and thine, and let not the fear of death keep thee longer in bondage.

Thirdly: Finally, he viewed his last scene as overspread with peace. "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." The departure of the just is peaceful. He has peace with heaven, with earth, and with his own nature. It were unseasonable to direct you, to-night, to the death-bed of the wicked. There is no peace there. Oh, no! What a scene is that! Oh, what a scene is that! Have you ever witnessed it? But how different the death of the Christian! How peaceful his departure!

I have done. I have endeavoured to give you an idea, though a very imperfect one, of the religious history of Simeon. He was just towards men, and devout towards God; he felt and expressed a deep interest in the advent of the Messiah, and its lofty aspects on the moral destinies of humanity; he realized his highest wish on earth, and then expressed his longings to mingle with the spirits of heaven.

THE LATE CALEB MORRIS. .

A Momiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widder truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

Subject: Paul's final Visit to Jerusalem; the Apostle as a Prisoner defending himself before the Sanhedrim.

"On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them. And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day," &c., &c.—Acts xxii. 30, xxiii. 1—11.

the people; these verses present to us his defence before the Sanhedrim. His appearance as a prisoner before the great council of the nation takes place on the day following his defence before the people.

"On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty whereof he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them."

It is here stated that Paul by the commands of the chief captain "was loosed from his bands." This does not mean that he was loosed of the bands mentioned in verse 25, but the chains by which he was bound by two soldiers mentioned in verse 33 of chapter 21. Thus unchained he stands before the assembled members of the Sanhedrim. The fact that the Sanhedrim was convened by the command of the Roman officer proves, how completely the Jews even in the internal

concerns of religion were subject to the Roman sway. In this trial, even if indeed it may be so called, we have two very remarkable things—the outrage of justice by a judge and the employment of policy by an apostle.

I. THE OUTRAGE OF JUSTICE BY A JUDGE. Ananias was the leading functionary in this judicial assembly, he was the president, the high priest. It appears from Josephus that there was a high priest by the name of Ananias at this time, and that he was an avaricious and an intolerant man, and who on account of his conduct with the Samaritans, had been sent by the Roman Governor Quadratus to answer for himself before the Emperor. Whether he was there detained or sent back to Judea, and if sent back to Judea, whether he continued or was re-appointed high priest are disputed points of no great moment. Luke's statement is quite sufficient that a man bearing the name of Ananias now acted as high priest and presided over this court of Jewish justice. This man, in the sacred name and temple of justice, now outraged the cause he professed to represent and administer. "He commanded them that stood by him to smite Paul in the mouth." Though this indignity accorded with the barbarism of both ancient and modern Oriental usages, it was not the less an outrage of all justice. The narrative suggests two remarks concerning it-

First: It was most unprovoked. Was there anything either in what Paul said or did to justify such gross insolence and injustice? Let us see. Was there anything in that look of his? He seems to have given them a wonderful look. And "Paul earnestly beholding the council." That look was the look of conscious innocence and of searching observation. We may rest assured there was nothing insolent or hard in that look but everything that was reverent and tender. That earnest look of Paul at the council would scarcely fail deeply to affect his own heart. Some twenty-five years had elapsed since he had been present as a member when Stephen the martyr stood a criminal, and to whose death he consented, as the intolerant Jew, to receive commission of the high priests

to go and persecute the disciples of Christ. As he looked round he would be struck with the great changes that had. been effected in that body. Many a familiar face was missing. had gone the way of all the earth, others very young had become infirm with years and grey with time. His earnest look about that Sanhedrim must have filled him with melting memories. Certainly there could have been nothing in the look to have provoked the indignity which the high. priest commanded to be dealt to him. Was there anything in what he said? What did he say? "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day." It has been remarked that the word fathers, which he employed: in addressing the people chapter 21, verse 21, is omitted in. this address before the Sanhedrim. He only says here. "Men and brethren." This omission might only be in tha, summary report, or, if it were omitted from his actual address, it might have been a matter of accident, not intention. In, any case, there is no ground for entertaining the neologic idea. that Paul intended a rudeness. His declaration that he "had." lived in all good conscience before God until that day" was farmore adapted to conciliate than to offend. An opportunity will occur in the sequel of the exposition of this book to offer; remarks on a "good conscience." All that Paul means by: the expression here is conscientiousness, a consciousness ef rectitude. Conscientiousness, however, as will appear again, does not always imply a good conscience. Saul even as a persecutor was conscientious. Saul making havoc of the Church; Dominic founding the Inquisition; Calvin instituting the death of Servetus; the Puritans imprisoning and banishing Baptists and Quakers, were all conscientious. can find nothing therefore either in the attitudes, looks, or words of the Apostle in any way to justify the grossly insolerat conduct of the high priest. The narrative of this outrage of justice by Ananias, shows

Secondly: It was nobly met. (1) It was met with manly: courage. Did the spirit of Paul cower and cringe before this insult? No. It rose into noble defiance:—

"Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"

Whited wall is a proverbial expression for hypocrite. The Heavenly Teacher himself denounced the Pharisees as whited sepulchres. The words of the Apostle may be either an imprecation or prediction. If the former, it was an outburst, not, we think, unjustified, of that warm temper of his which formed the foundation of his noble nature. Indignation in itself is not wrong. On the contrary, it is a virtuous passion when roused as in this case by the vision of a moral enormity. If the latter, a prediction, the Apostle spoke under the inspiration of truth. Paul knew that the man who so outraged justice and law as Ananias did now would inevitably meet with the retribution of Heaven. History shows that soon after he did become the victim of eternal justice. informs us that he, with his brother Hezekiah, were slain during the terrible excitement that occurred in Jerusalem . when the insurgent ruffians under their leader, Manahem had get possession of the holy city. At first he attempted to conceal himself in an aqueduct, but afterwards was drawn forth and killed. But whether the Apostle's language was that of imprecation or prediction, his courage in either case was strikingly manifest. It was not in the power of a mortal to crush into servility that Christ-inspired soul of his. This insalt was also met (2) by commendable candour:-

"Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people."

It appears that there were some in the Sanhedrim on this occasion who regarded Paul's words as profane and rebellious. "Revilest thou God's high priest?" The reply of the Apostle is variously interpreted. "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest." Some suppose that the Apostle speaks ironically, that he meant to say, I never could suppose that such an unjust man was a high priest, that a man who so outraged justice should sit in her seat and administer her

affairs. Others suppose that he really meant what he said, that he really did not know that the man who commanded him to be smitten on the mouth was a high priest. who take the latter view, the view I incline to, must regard the Apostle as in some measure apologising for the hastiness of his utterance, as virtually saying, I acknowledge my error and my haste, I have spoken unadvisably with my lips, the insult and cruelty I have received have betrayed me into an 'undue warmth of temper; I know that the office of high priest is divine, however corrupt the man is who fills it, and respect for the office should have made me more cautious, for it is written, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy (Exodus xxii. 28.) The best men on earth are liable to be overtaken by temper, and the candour which like Paul's hastens to acknowledge the defect is a rare attribute of excellence.

The other remarkable thing which you have in this trial is-

II. THE EMPLOYMENT OF POLICY BY AN APOSTLE. The Apostle having seen enough to convince him that there was no prospect whatever of obtaining a fair trial before the Sanhedrim had recourse to a clever measure of policy. The narrative leads us to consider the nature and effects of this policy.

First: The nature of the policy which that Apostle employed. What was the expedient he employed? Seeing that there was no chance of having justice done him by that jadicial assembly, he endeavours at once to divert their attention from himself by raising a question that would set them into a furious disputation amongst themselves. The members of the Sanhedrim were composed of Sadducees and Pharisees. One of the grand and chief questions that divided these parties was the doctrine of the resurrection and the existence of a spirit world. This question Paul raises in their midst:—

"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Saddudees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council. Men and

brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

Some indeed have censured Paul for having had recourse to such an expedient. Those persons should remember that Paul stated nothing but the truth. It was true that he was a Pharisee, held all the theological tenets of that sect, and had been brought up from a child in that school. It was also true that the grand doctrine of the body's resurrection, was one of the leading themes of his discourses everywhere. (Acts xiii. 34, xvii. 31, 32; xxvi. 23—25; 1 Cor. xv.) And was, moreover, true that the proclamation of this doctrine was the cause of much of his persecution. All, therefore, that he did was with a master-stroke of policy to declare a truth which would put him in sympathy with the Pharisees, who formed perhaps the most influential part of that judicial assembly, before which he now stood as a criminal.

Secondly: The effect of the policy which that Apostle now employed. It answered the end he sought. It divided the Sanhedrim and got the Pharisees on his side:—

"And when he had so said, there arose a great dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry: and the seribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man, but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle."

Three results come out of the policy of the Apostle on this occasion. (1) A manifestation of the irritating power of a sectionising dogma. The resurrection of the dead, which was a grand truth to the Apostle, was a mere dogma both to the Sadducees and Pharisees, accepted by one and rejected by the other. But it was just that dogma that divided them into two sects, that marshalled them into opposing forces. As a rule, whatever idea divides one religious sect from another, is the idea to raise in order to awaken sectarian bitterness and battle. Immersion, Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, Independency,—these things which make sects,—raise them into discussion, and you will awaken irritation in the parties they divide. Paul knew human nature, and he raised the question that divided the Sanhedrim, and thus diverted attention from himself by awakening a conflict between themselves.

Another result is, (2) A demonstration of the Apostle's innocence. So little impressed was the Sanhedrim with the
idea of the Apostle's criminality, that they forgot all about it
in the disputation amongst themselves, and, more than this,
the Pharisees actually said, "We find no evil in this man,"
and gave the advice which Gamaliel gave the same council
some years before. "But if a spirit or an angel hath spoken
to him, let us not fight against God." Another result that
comes up from the policy employed by the Apostle is, (3) His
deliverance from Jewish persecution. "And when there
arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul
should have been pulled in pieces by them, commanded the
soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among
them, and bring him into the castle."

In conclusion, do not get a wrong impression of Paul's policy. Though we have already seen him on various occasions displaying great prudence, for example, taking part in a Nazarite's vow in order to disarm the unreasoning hostility of his countrymen; then putting forward all the considerations which truth would authorise, in order to conciliate the mind of his Jewish audiences; then availing himself of his Roman citizenship in order to avoid the infliction of a cruel and unjust torture; and then, as in the case before us, taking advantage of the doctrine that divided his judges in order to avoid their verdict of condemnation: albeit in all those strokes of policy there is not the slightest approach to the disingenuous, the evasive, the shifting. In all there is an unbending honesty and an invincible courage.

Fomiletic **Aotes** on the Epistle of James.

(No. VI.)

SUBJECT: Divine Legislation for Man in a World of Evil.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, alow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls."—Jas. i. 19—21.

INCE (as we have seen) God is so far from being the author of evil, that He is working evermore for its destruction in man, "by the word of truth"—the Gospel—the practical inference of James is, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be," &c. Here is Divine legislation for sinful man in a sinful world. Unlike the laws of men, this commandment is so exceeding broad as to comprehend all the susceptibilities and faculties of human nature.

Thus we have here-

I. LEGISLATION FOR THE EAR. "Be swift to hear." The ear is one of the chief, if not the chief of the receptive organs of the soul. This organ receives both good and evil. Of course the apostle does not mean "be swift to hear" the bad. Alas! the human ear is fearfully keen, as was that of Eve long ago, to evil sounds. It has a greed for the unchaste, the slanderous, the erroneous. The duty here enjoined is a readiness to listen to the pure, the generous, the true—"the word of truth." Teachableness is the state of mind required. This includes (1.) Freedom from prejudice. Prejudice stops the ear, as in the case of Stephen's murderers. (2.) Eagerness to learn. The cry should be that of young Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

II. LEGISLATION FOR THE TONGUE. "Be slow to speak." Neander says there is such a thing as self-willed silence, but, as self-willed loquacity was the fault of the Church at the

time, against that James now writes. Evidently he does not mean (1.) Unsocial taciturnity. What is sulky and cynical speechlessness, but a "dumb devil?" Nor does James mean (2.) A drawling utterance. This is the speech of a lary soul, whose monotonous sounds are somnific. The slowness of speech the apostle enjoins is that of Cautiousness. We should be cautious (a) Because we are in danger of speaking the wrong thing. Angels and all sinless beings may speak involuntarily, because the unwise, the unkind, the untrue, is not in them. But our speech is the channel of streams from a fountain more or less polluted. (b) Because we are in danger of speaking at the wrong time. There are appropriate seasons even for the utterance of the true in this world. Jesus often manifested a Divine reserve. "There is a time to speak."

III. LEGISLATION FOR THE TEMPER. "Slow to wrath." The word used here, ὀργὴν, indicates an abiding, settled habit of the mind, with the purpose of revenge. In this injunctio there is one thing implied, and another thing expressed. The thing implied is, That men in this world of evil are indanger of being provoked to wrath. There is a great deal here to irritate, to awaken indignation, and to throw the soul off its balance. Even meek Moses lost his temper, and Pau called the high priest "thou whited wall." The thing expressed is, That wrath in no case tends to excellence of character. "The righteousness of God," here means the righteousness of character God requires. Passion never produces piety.

IV. LEGISLATION FOR THE LIFE. "Lay apart all filthiness," &c. Here is the summing up of all. It insists upon (1.) Renunciation of all evil. The expression here, "superfluity of naughtiness," must not, of course, be understood as meaning that there is a certain malice, κακία, that is not superfluous, and need not be laid apart; but rather that all evil is superfluous, and must be renounced. (2.) Appropriation of good. "Receive with meekness," &c. (a) The thing.

received, "ingrafted word," &c. There is here implied about the Gospel, Its essential vitality. A dead thing cannot be ingrafted. Its fitness to human nature. What the stock is to the graft, the human soul is to the Gospel. (β) The manner of receiving it. "With meekness." Manton well says, "there must be incision before insertion, meekness before ingrafting. (γ) The reason for receiving it. "Able to save your souls." The Gospel is able to save your souls. Its great theme is an Almighty Saviour.

(No. VII.)

SUBJECT: The Word of Words.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—Jas. i. 22—25.

"The apostle has shown in an earlier portion of this chapter that God is restoring men to holiness by "the word of truth"——
the Gospel, and then having enjoined upon those to whom he writes this epistle, rightfully to receive that Gospel, he proceeds in our text to show what is the effect of the "word" upon the two great classes of those who have to do with it. Thus there is noticed in this injunction,

I. "THE WORD" AS MERELY HEARD. He entreats men not to be "hearers only." They are to avoid this because of two consequences which result whenever the word is merely heard. (1.) It is only superficially known. The Divine commands must be translated into human conduct before they are rightly understood and appreciated. They are for the life, and the life alone can interpret them. "He that doeth the will knoweth the doctrine." (2.) It leaves men in self-ignorance. It is true of the whole Gospel, as it was of the life of Jesus, that by it "the thoughts of many hearts shall be revealed." With it we see both our likeness and unlikeness to God. But

this revelation of ourselves is never realised by merely hearing the truth. Just as the man who looks in the mirror once for all (for that is the meaning of the tense here, κατενόησε), and thinks no more of it, but is immediately gone, will forget the appearance of his physical face, so the mere hearer of the word will rapidly forget whatever of his moral image he may in a passing moment have seen. Self-knowledge is dependent on obedience. Professor Plumptre on this text remarks:— "Each single act of disobedience, each sin wilfully committed, each preference of the law of the flesh to the law of God, of the judgment of men before His judgment, weakens our power to discern what we are, and what He wishes us to be."

II. "THE WORD" RIGHTLY PRACTISED. When men are true doers of "the word." (1.) It is thoroughly investigated. The obedient hearer is spoken of by James as one who "looketh into." The word παρακύψας, thus translated, is that employed to describe the stooping down of the disciples to look into Christ's sepulchre, and also the narrow search which the angels desire to use to discover the mysteries of salvation. dently signifies that the practical hearer closely inquires into "the word." He looks into it (a) to learn to obey it, and then, having obeyed, he loves it, (\$\beta\$) and looks into it because he loves. "O how I love thy law," &c. (2.) It confers the highest blessing. "Whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein," &c. From this sentence of Scripture we are taught that the Gospel (a) imparts complete liberty. It is the "perfect law of liberty," that is, the liberating law emancipating from the power and the guilt of sin. "I shall walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts." (B) It ensures constant happiness. "The word," when rightly practised, does not merely tell of a heaven of future blessedness, as the result of virtuous deeds, but makes the obedient man "blessed in his deed"happy in his daily doings.

While the whole of this epistle is perhaps the distinctest echo of the Sermon on the Mount that any of the apostolic teachings afford, this utterance of James about hearers and doers of the word has a specially marvellous resemblance to the closing tones of that Sermon, "Whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them," &c.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: Daily Dying.
"I die daily."—1 Cor. xv. 31.

Analysis of Fomily the Seben Jundred und Sifty-First.

argument, style, influence, surpassing this chapter. It shines as the brightest orb in all literature—an orb that sends its radiance into the grave, and reveals a glorious future for redeemed humanity. Millions of mourners, in committing their loved ones to the tomb, have felt the consolatory influence of this priceless section of apostolic writing. It has hushed the sigh, dried the tear, dispelled the gloom, and lifted the spirits of the bereaved to worlds over which death has no power. Were these verses but the creations of fancy or the dreams of fanaticism, I scarcely know that I should be disposed to give them up as worthless. The whole is so grateful to our hearts, so enrapturing to our hopes, so consolatory in sorrow, so uplifting in depression, that its erasure from sacred literature would be an incalculable loss.

As the Homilist has discussed at various times different portions of this chapter,* we will confine our attention to the short sentence now read—"I die daily." Though Paul used these words to express the perils to which he was daily exposed as the apostle of a faith so directly at war with the prejudices, the superstitions, the philosophies, the institutions, the habits and spirit of his age, as to rouse the spirit of bitter hostility against him wherever he went, there is a sense in which the words have a universal application.

^{*} See, for example, vol. vii., third series, pp. 278 and 279.

I. THERE IS A DAILY DYING THAT IS INEVITABLE TO HUMANITY.

First: There is a daily dying of our corporeal frame. In each human body the seed of death is implanted, the law of mortality is at work. There is decay with every respiration and heart-throb. When Dr. Watts wrote, "The moment we begin to live we all begin to die," he wrote what is not the mere ebullition of a poetic sadness, but a fact of scientific demonstration. The water does not more naturally roll towards the ocean, or a falling body more naturally gravitate towards the centre of the earth, than the human frame runs every moment to dissolution. Life streams from us at every pore. This fact should teach us (1.) that worldly mindedness. is an infraction of reason. What a monstrous absurdity it is to set our supreme affections upon objects from which we are departing every moment! As the ship of the emigrant in full sail is bearing him every moment farther and farther from his native shore, so destiny is bearing every man farther and farther from his connection with this earth. No anchor can stop this ship of destiny. All "Life Insurance" offices: recognize and act upon this fact. Every man's life is less valuable to-day than it was yesterday. This fact teaches us (2.) that sorrow for the departed should be moderated. Why indulge in grief for those who are gone? Their departure was but obedience to the resistless law of their nature, and that same law is daily bearing us whither they are gone. Why battle with destiny? This fact shows (3.) that Christianity is an invaluable boon to mortals. It does two things,—it teaches us that there is a future world of blessedness, and points us the way by which that blessed world is reached.

Secondly: There is a daily dying of our social world. We live not only with others but by them. Without society we might exist, but live we could not. They are the objects of our sympathies, the subjects of our conscious life; they engage our thoughts, they affect our hearts, they originate our motives, they stimulate our conduct; and all this is much

of our life. But this social world in which we live, and by which we live, is dying daily, and with its death much of our own life dies. The social circumstances which feed our life are changing every day. No two days are they exactly the same. Something comes and something goes every hour. Like the waves of the river that roll at our feet, as we stand. they sweep by, and they roll back no more. We are to these circumstances what the traveller is to the scenes through which he passes. As he proceeds, old objects fade from his view, and new ones appear. The circle of the nursery in which we once lived is gone; the circle of the school and other circles in which we lived have broken up long ago. Thus it is we "die daily." The thoughts, the love, the grief, the anger, the fear, the hopes which were once elements of life to us, have passed away because the objects of them have gone.

Thirdly: There is daily dying of our mental motivity. The motives that influence us to action are elements of life, and they are constantly dying. For example, the leading purpose that a man has is for the time one of his strongest motives of action, that which touches most potently the springs of intellect and heart; but the leading purpose of every man is a dying thing. It is dead as a motive both when it is frustrated and given up, as is constantly the case, and also when it is fully realised. A realised purpose has lost its motivity. Thus we die daily in mind. Many of the loves, hopes, fears, romances, ambitions, which once formed much of our life, have been buried long ago in the ever-widening cemetery of the soul.

II. THERE IS A DAILY DYING THAT IS OPTIONAL TO HUMANITY. This optional death is of two kinds—the criminal and the virtuous.

First: There is the criminal. There are noble things in man that are dying daily, for which he is responsible. In the depraved soul, sensibility of conscience, generosity of impulse, elasticity of intellect, freedom of thought, spiritu-

ality of feeling,—these, that constitute the highest life of man, die daily in the corrupt soul. The sinner is constantly murdering these, and their blood cries to heaven for vengeance. "To be carnally minded is death."

Secondly: There is the virtuous. There are certain things that men should and ought to crucify—selfishness, sensuality, love of the world, &c. The highest life of man is a daily dying to all that is mean, false, mercenary, unspiritual, and uncharitable. The apostle felt this when he said, "I," that is my carnal self, "am crucified with Christ"; nevertheless, "I," that is my spiritual self, "live," &c., &c.

SUBJECT: Man as a learner, and Christ as a teacher.

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."—John xvi. 12.

Analysis of Jamily the Seben Jundred und Sifty-Second.

THE feelings of a true and earnest teacher who knows that he is addressing the people of his charge for the last time, are set forth in the last volume of the Homilist, page 276. It is highly probable that such feelings in some measure, and in certain aspects, set forth Christ's feelings during the delivery of this last protracted discourse to his disciples. He communicated to them thoughts and facts of wonderful consolatory power. He warned them of their approaching trials, and strengthened them to meet them. He exhorted them to fidelity and holiness. He announced his speedy departure. And, having said many most precious and beautiful things to them, He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But Christ had resources under these circumstances, such as no teacher has. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." The Spirit, whom the Master was about to send unto his disciples, would guide them into the truth which then they were not able to bear. I regard the text as the expression of a truth which is applicable to all the disciples of Christ at all times. Thus regarding it suggests two leading ideas.

I. THE LIMITATION OF MAN AS A LEARNER.

There is a limit to our power of reception, and a limit to our power of enduring what we receive.

First: There is intellectual limitation. Our power of application is limited. We cannot prosecute any prolonged investigation without interruption from weariness. There is also much weakness in our mental exercises. In our studies we soon meet with problems which we cannot solve, and mysteries which we cannot fathom. This is true of our investigations of nature and life; true also of our investigations of Revelation. We are moreover surrounded by a great spiritual universe, and form a part of it; and yet we know very little concerning it. Our perceptions of the spiritual are very dim. "We see" only "through a glass darkly."

Second: There is moral and spiritual limitation. Not only are we unable to receive much that Christ has to impart, but much that we may be able to receive we could not endure. To hear much and understand little is oppressive. There are truths which require a quick apprehension to grasp them, and which demand a pure and brave heart to bear the knowledge of them. Our perceptions are dull; our souls are feeble; we are poor, limited learners.

What an argument is this for humility! We should be modest in the maintenance of our opinion while we are so ignorant. We should be humble in the presence of mystery.

II. THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST AS A TEACHER.

This is seen-

First: In the vastness of his resources. The treasures of his mind are infinite. To the highest created intelligence he will ever be able to apply the words of the text. "In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." His knowledge embraces the whole realm of being, from the

most insignificant ephemera to the highest archafgel before his throne. His knowledge covers the whole realm of matter, from the sand-grain upon the beach, to the worlds and systems that throng the immensities. His knowledge includes all the minutiæ of every object which it comprehends; and it comprehends everything that exists. All actualities, all possibilities, all things, past, present, and future, are fully known to Him. There is no teacher whose resources will compare with those of the "Carpenter's Son." How strengthening this is to those who confide in Him. "If God: be with us, who can be against us."

How terrible is this knowledge to those who are opposed to Him! He knows the plans of the wicked in all their details, and He will thwart them. He knows their sins, and will punish them.

Second: In the communication of those resources to man. (1) He communicates. How much had He communicated to: his disciples before He said, "Ye can bear no more now"! He has communicated much to us. Many things in nature which were once secret He has revealed. Many things in mind, many pertaining to his moral government, many which are yet future to us. He has revealed. Wonderful are the communications which Christ makes to us! (2) He communications nicates according to our mental and spiritual capacity. The statement of the text does not imply that anything which the Master had previously said to his disciples was untrue; or that He had led them into any misconceptions. It simply means that hitherto He had communicated to them only as portion of the truth; that He had given to them the elemen. tary knowledge of his religion, and not the more sublime and thorough knowledge; and the reason of this reserve was a. tender regard for them. The teacher knew the capacity of his pupils, and regulated his communications accordingly.

This will apply to the great mysteries of the plan of redemption. Our Lord had just spoken of "sin, righteens ness, and judgment," before He uttered the words of the text. There are mysteries connected with these three words.

which we cannot understand. The mystery of sin, atonement, salvation, and retribution is very great. May it not be that the reason of this mystery is that we could not bear the knowledge?

This will apply to the mysteries of unfulfilled prophecy. The Master evidently had this in view when He uttered the text, for in the next verse He promised the disciples that the Spirit of truth should show them "things to come." If we could bear the knowledge of those things which are dimly foreshadowed in the Apocalypse, Christ would reveal it to us by his Spirit.

'This will apply to the mysteries of God's providence. We cannot reconcile the seeming anomalies of God's government. The knowledge to enable us to do this we could not bear now.

This will apply to the experiences of our own life. There is much darkness resting upon the past; much mystery in the present; of our future lot we know scarcely anything. Why is this? Because we could not bear to know the reason of the stroke which crushed us, or of the trials which now oppress us; nor could we bear the knowledge of the exact character of the future. We could not bear the removal of the mystery which strikes us dumb. Our Teacher knows exactly how much we can bear, and He will not impart a cleam of truth more than we can endure. Brethren, let us be thankful for mystery. Christ's method of communicating knowledge is a guarantee of our security from being overwhelmed with intolerable revelations. It is also a guarantee of our everlasting advancement in knowledge. Our Teacher unfolds his ideas gradually; and He, from his infinite mind, will continue the unfoldment for ever. What discipleship is ours? Everlasting discipleship? Throughout the endless ages of our being we shall be constantly making acquisitions in knowledge, and yet our Teacher will ever soar infinitely above our highest attainments. What communications our Teacher will make in the future ! In the light that He will pour upon our life, how changed our impressions of it will be! The poverty that crushed us will be a thing to bless God for; the hand that prostrated us by disappointment and suffering will be embalmed with the kisses of gratitude; the bereaved parents will look upon the grave of their child as a memorial of richest blessing; and the widow and orphans will praise the dispensation of providence that rendered them solitary: all will unite to magnify Him who doeth all things well! There is much mystery now—dark, impenetrable, almost crushing mystery—within us and around us. But God will, make all things clear, and more than justify his ways to man. "What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter." Meanwhile, let us wait—calmly, trustfully let us wait—until we are able to bear the revelation.

Portsmouth.

WILLIAM JONES.

Subject: Rich Poverty.

"As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Inalysis of Fomily the Seben Fundred and Lifty-Chird.

BSERVE how necessary it is to hear the whole of a matter. If we heard the first part of this statement only, we should say, "Here is indicated as sad and drear a lot as mortal ever inherited—a state in which the man has lost all heart," &c. And if we did but hear the last part of the sentence, we should think, "Here is Fortune's favourite, intoxicated with his uncounted treasures," &c.

Neither part of the text must be explained away. The first cannot, the second must not be. From a worldly stand-point Paul was as poor as he could be—not enough of ground even to be for him a grave, where his wearied body could lie down to rest in the sleep of death, was he owner of. But we must also conclude that this apostle was a greater possessor than the richest Crossus, or the mightiest Cossar of the world. For we must either believe so much, or believe that he was a mere juggler with words, or mad with enthusiasm, and rich only in

the untold possessions of a wild and frenzied imagination. We cannot believe the latter, and so must conclude that the houseless wanderer, which had not where to lay his head, was at the same time the inheritor of all things.

I. Let us look for a few minutes at the first clause—" AS HAVING NOTHING." And let us learn—

First: That the truly great are not essentially the visibly rich. We live in an age so material that this needs to be proclaimed with trumpet blast. What is meant now by a man being well off, is his having several thousands of golden coins. Let him have them, and mansions open for him their doors, &c., whilst poverty, just because it is poverty, is shrunk from as though a leprosy. Nay, there are circles of society where vice is winked at, but into the presence of which virtue without £10,000 would not be admitted for a moment. How often the Church, in its estimate of men, imitates the world! No doubt if Paul sat amongst the peers, enough would be made of him; but if he lived again as he did when he wrote these words, who would have much to say for him or about him? Self-impoverishment crowns with greatness. Paul had nothing, not by an unalterable necessity, but for Jesus sake.

Secondly: That it becomes us to make greater self-denials. How seldom do our poverties arise from self-sacrifices! There is only virtue in them when they do. Sooner or later we have all to feel the crushing cross, but how rarely because we have taken it up!

Thirdly: That God does not reward his servants with material pay. If any man had a claim for such reward, it was Paul. But why is this? (1.) God does not attach the false importance to material possessions that we do. (2.) He will let us do and dare for him without a bribe.

Fourthly: That God's poor are the best off. For see the heritage to which they know that they are begotten! They verily have their reward. The Master promised that whoever for Him left houses and lands, &c., should have a thousandfold compensation, and Paul more than proves the promise

true. If there is a servant of Christ bemoaning his poverty, let him lift up his head, and grasp the title-deeds that are his rightful heritage, and when he ponders them, he shall find that he can say, "As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

II. Let us look for a few minutes at the second clause, "AND YET POSSESSING ALL THINGS," and let us see how it comes to pass that a good man does own all things.

First: By holding a true relation to things, he possesses all things. (1.) He who holds a true relation to things, is instructed by them. Who can own aught in such great reality? Because a man has paid for a lot of works of art, and has them arranged in his splendid gallery, does it follow that he is the truest owner of them ! If he goes in and out amongst them uninfluenced, &c., I call the man that but once has gazed upon them, but in that moment has felt their uplifting power, &c., their owner in a far truer sense. And now take a man whose book shelves are filled with books. whose pages are to him unread and unreadable, do you call him their truest owner? Not if there is another that has access to them, and has the golden key to unlock their mighty secrets, &c. And so though a man owns not an acre of ground, and not a house in all the world, yet if he holds a true relation to things, there is nothing but in this sense becomes his. For the world becomes to him a school, a book, a museum, a gallery, &c. There is no star on high but has some light for him; no lily in the valley but has some teaching, &c. (2.) He who holds a true relation to things, gets enjoyment from them. And what more can any owner do? No man could hold so false a relation to things as he who looks upon them with no longing but to have or to feel that he has. But he who sees in things the monuments of the divine power and wisdom, and goodness, and forbearance, and love, holds a true relation to them, and he gets the joy they can give and were made to give. What is it but the hope of getting enjoyment from possessions that prompts

mest men to toil, &c., for them? But it does not follow that they get the satisfaction they hope for. There are men that sit in their lordly mansions that might as well be immured in a dungeon, for aught of joy they get from the blaze of splendour that surrounds them. There are men who gave thousands for their majestic parks in the hope that at last they would get enjoyment, but who have never walked in the shadow of the noble trees, and along the side of the silver stream where the deer sport, save with an aching heart, and never will. Men who fret for what they have not, own not what they have. But the man that sees in all beauty and bounty the heart of his Father-God, loves and adores and praises; and the mounts, and the rocks, and the valleys, and the sun, and moon, and stars, that he calls upon to join him in his praise, lend themselves unto him and leave him, "having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (3.) He who holds a true relation to things, gets growth in the midst of them. If a man's nature is ripened, enriched by things, what can make him in such a great sense their owner?

Secondly: By holding a true relation to Christ, he becomes possessor of all things. (Rom. viii. 17; Rev. iii. 21.)

H. MARTYN.

Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. IV.)

Subject: Spurious Scriptures.

T is much to be regretted that those philosophical deists who sprung up so plentifully during the last century should have been so late to take the field in denying the necessity of a written revelation of God's Will. For, most unfortunately for their argument, the World had long prejudged the question, having in all ages had its Bible, as well as the Church. The religious element, as powerful among the old philosophers as in our own day, had from the earliest times

prompted them to supply their own cravings in this direction, and to invent a Bible of their own. Just as the Jews grafted, their Talmuds and Targums on the pure word of revelation, and, mingling with it their own traditions, turned the truth of God into a lie, so the old heathen, catching up the fragments of primitive religion and sacred history, revealed to the patriarchs, and interweaving them with the great truths taught by the "things that are made" the evidences of the Eternal Power and Godhead, deduced from the Creation, shaped for themselves a system of theology, which eventually reduced to writing, formed the groundwork of their so-called sacred books.

We look, therefore, on the existence of such books as an inevitable necessity of the human mind. Our quarrel is only with their assumed antiquity and value, and the position assigned to them with reference to the genuine Scriptures. The sceptic, of course, wishes us to accept them as older than the oldest of our Old Testament books, and thus insinuates that the inspired writers are indebted to these spurious scriptures for many of their facts, their doctrines, and their institutions, philosophical, civil, ceremonial and dietetic. On this ground we have little to say to those who make no secret of their enmity to revelation; but are greatly grieved and astonished. to find those who ought to know better, and have a real regard for the Scriptures, falling in with the stream, and virtually admitting that what we are accustomed to regard as of divine origin is but an adaptation of the uninspired ideas of heathen nations; whilst in reality it is the grand original from which they have borrowed everything worth having. and, like those minds compared by Coleridge to a sponge, are, through the medium of these so-called sacred books, returning a little dirtier than when they imbibed them.

But what are these Sacred Books? Many nations lay claim to them—India, China, Chaldæa, Egypt, Phoenicia, Iran; but those, perhaps, which have excited most attention are the Vedas, the Pouranas, the Shastres of the Hindoos, and the much-be-praised Institutes of Menu, reputed to be the oldest and most important of all.

There is, as we have already hinted, but one of their many: claims to notice, that we are careful to discuss—their relating antiquity. How do we know them to be old? They look so; and they are written in the mysterious Sanscrit—the language and characters of the Brahmins! We honestly believe

that this is nearly all to be said in their favour, for the weight of evidence, both external and internal, is altogether

against this theory of their great age.

In the first place, we believe the Sanscrit to be of far lower antiquity than is generally supposed. Sir William Jones, great in matters of philology, did not consider it to have been the primeval language of India, but to have been introduced by conquerors from other kingdoms. Bayer supposed it to be no more than six hundred years old in his day, and Professor Wilson, who has not long since favoured us with a translation of the Rig-veda Sanhita, though he thinks it older, craves a margin of many centuries, and confesses, after all, that he knows nothing about it approaching to certainty. It does not seem at all likely, indeed, that a language written, unlike most ancient tongues, from left to right, "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either," should have sprung up in India in the very infancy of letters. Long, very long, before we knew anything of it, the Greeks themselves had overrun that country, and, as the Sanscrit is said to bear "a stronger affinity to their language than could possibly have been produced by accident," it is only natural to conclude that they might have leavened the primeval language with the graces and excellences of their own.

So much, therefore, for the internal evidence deduced from the language itself in which these sacred books are written. But weightier and more conclusive arguments may be urged from the tenar of their contents. The Institutes of Menua code of laws and ethical maxims which have been exalted into competition with the writings of Moses-are by common consent allowed to be older than the Vedas. It seems quite clear, indeed, that they are so, as they were written before the rite of cremation obtained in India, although this rite is recognised, and sometimes commended, in the Vedas. These Institutes of Menu, amongst other things, regulate the legal interest of money, and the limited rate of it in different cases, with an exception in regard to adventures at sea! Adventures at sea? Were such things known, even among the enterprising Phoenicians and Carthaginians, two thousand years ago? But, more especially, were they known among the old Hindoos, who, like the Egyptians, thought it a high crime and misdemeanour to leave their native land? We are not, indeed, left in doubt upon this subject. Arrian, in

describing the departure of Alexander's fleet from his new conquests on the Hydaspes, tells us that the master of the world was determined to attempt "something surprisingly great and uncommon," when he conceived the idea of sailing "all through the sea" from India to the Gulf of Persia-a passage of a few days' duration, and along-shore for the entire distance! But this is not all. The poor Hindoos were so terrified at the proposal, that he could get none of them to go with him, and was compelled to man his fleet with Phœnicians, Cyprians, and other foreigners. The whole country, far and near, was in a ferment; and the very men so great in "adventures at sea" could only look on, awestricken and bewildered, seriously expecting that all would go to the bottom together. It is not easy, indeed, to see from which of her castes—priests, soldiers, tradesmen, or shepherds-India could have drafted her mercantile marine!

If, therefore, we admit that these "Institutes" are older than the Vedas, the latter could have had no claim to the remote antiquity assigned to them, had we no other proof that they cannot date earlier than the commencement of the Christian era, which we think we have. Diodorus, Strabe, and Arrian, all of them writing about eighteen hundred years ago, enumerate seven castes, or classes, as existing among the Hindoos in their day. At present there are but four, and this is the number recognised in the Vedas—not casually or incidentally, but as fundamentally interwoven with the religious system of that people—the Brahmins, claiming descent from the head of Brahma; the Ketteri, rajahs, or soldiers, from his arms; the Bice, or tradesmen, from his body; and the Suder, or shepherds, from his feet. We could scarcely wish for a more conclusive proof than this.

Yet, in order to exhaust the subject, we believe it can be shown that the Hindoos had no written language at all at the period referred to. Both Herodotus and Arrian lead us to infer this, and Strabo distinctly affirms it, so that we should not at all wonder if the "writynges and letanies" of old Sir John Mandeville—by which, no doubt, their sacred books were meant—belong to a period but little more remote than the days of that redoubted traveller, as nothing was known of their contents in this country even a century ago. So much for the putative antiquity of these spurious scriptures!

The Chinese admit that Buddha, their accredited lawgiver, himself came from India, and was only been about a thou-

sand years before Christ, so that this religious system may

be safely regarded as of comparatively recent origin.

The Egyptians attribute their sacred books to Hermes. But we knew nothing of this Hermes till the days of Manetho, who pretends to quote from him. His writings, as we have already shown, are so contradictory and absurd, that we need waste no time in refuting them. The Hermetic Creed—attributed to this Hermes—has been unduly extolled by many who see no sublimity in Holy Writ; but all that is good in it is so evidently borrowed from the Jewish Theology, that we may dismiss it with the remark that it is only known to us through Jamblichus, who was cotemporary with the fathers of the Christian Church.

A word or two about the traditions of Babylon, Sidon, Assyria, and Iran, which, according to Dr. Rowland Williams, are brought by Bunsen to "illustrate and confirm, though to modify, our interpretation of Genesis!" Tradition may be a very good handmaid to Revelation, but it is rather too much to make her the patron and censor of inspired truth. Doubt, it would thus seem, may confirm certainty, and conjecture, modify facts! And this without any nice inquiry into the age or character of such traditions.

Borossus, who has left us the Chaldean Fragments, lived in the fourth century before Christ, but we owe their preservation to Eusebius, who wrote about seven centuries later.

Of Sanchoniatho, who records those of Phœnicia, we know nothing—where he lived, or whether he lived at all, being very uncertain. For the Greek translation of such fragments as have come down to us, we are likewise indebted to Eusebius. But what intrinsic glory do both these authors possess, according to Bunsen and his annotator, Dr. Williams! "It is strange," says he, "how nearly these ancient cosmogonies approach what may be called the philosophy of Moses, whilst they fall short in what Longinus called, his 'worthy conception of the Divinity!"

Unfortunately for these scoffers, there is such a thing as common sense, and the intelligent masses may choose to decide the matter for themselves. Let us listen for a moment to our Chaldean oracle: "There was a time in which there was nothing but darkness, and an abyss of waters, wherein resided most hideous beings, which were produced of a two-fold principle. Men appeared with two wings, some with four, and with two faces. They had one body, but two

heads—the one of a man: the other of a woman. The darkness and the abyss of waters certainly approach not to the philosophy, but to the facts of Moses; and we certainly miss the "worthy conception" of the Divine fiat, "Light, bei" But, au reste, we must confess that it looks very like an extract from the "Voiage and Travaille of Sir John Mande-

ville, Knight."

Never mind! The Pheenician cosmogony of Sanchoniatho may enter, perhaps, into closer competition with Moses. "The beginning of all things," he says, "was a dark and condensed windy air, or a breeze of dark air, and a chaos turbid and indistinct, like Erebus, and these things were infinite, and for a long time had no bound." Pity these old cosmogonists did not approach somewhat nearer the philosophy of Moses! In that case, they would not have battled of condensed breezes, which can exist only by rarefaction, or infinities that had just come into being, and "for a long time had no bound!"

But their cosmogonies do our sceptics yet further service, by setting aside the current idea that Noah's Deluge was brought about by the direct interference of God himself. In them, "Our Deluge takes its place among geological phenomena, no longer a disturbance from which Science shrinks, but a prolonged play of the forces of fire and water, rendering the primeval regions of North Asia uninhabitable.", So, because Science "shrinks" from the idea that God drowned the world in judgment, we must look on Noah's flood as a mere phase in the ordinary processes of nature. How true is it that evil men and seducers "wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived!"

Of the traditions of Iran, one word, in completion of our subject. Zoroaster, to whom we owe the "Oracles" of this people, is himself a myth, as there is a disparity of a thousand years with regard to the probable period of his existence. His writings, moreover, have been frequently challenged as spurious, and, from the fragments preserved to our time, they appear to be so mystic and speculative that little can be made of them. A short extract must suffice:—

[&]quot;The father congregated seven firmaments of the world, Circumscribing heaven in a round figure, And fixed a great company of inerratic stars;

And he constituted a septennary of erratic animals;

Placing earth in the middle, and water in the middle of the earth, The air above these."

If "Science" do not "shrink" from such wretched twaddle, we do, and turn with grateful hearts to the Mosaic record of Creation; thank God that He has not left us to the bewilderment of worthless traditions!

STET.

Biblical Criticism.

By Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES .- EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chap. xxi. (continued).—26. Then Paul taking to him the men [avôpas], the next day having purified himself with them, went into the temple [To ispor], announcing the fulfilment of the days of purification, until there was offered for each one of them the offering. 27. But when the seven days were about anding, the Jews of Asia, having seen him in the temple [icou], disturbed all the crowd, and laid hands on him, 28. Crying, Men [aνδρes] of Israel, help. This is the man [aνθρωπος] that teaches all everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and besides brought Hellenes into the temple [ispor], and has made common this holy place. 29. For they had seen before Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, whom they thought that Paul brought into the temple [ispor]. 30. And the whole city was moved, and there arose a running together of the people; and seizing Paul they dragged him without the temple [ispov]; and straightway the doors were shut. 31. And while they were seeking to kill him, tidings went up to the præfect [lit. chief of a thousand] of the cohort, that the whole of Jerusalem was disturbed. 32. Who at once. taking soldiers and centurions, ran down upon them: but they, seeing the præfect and the soldiers, ceased beating Paul. 33. Then the profect approaching seized him, and commanded to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he might be and what he had done. 34. And some shouted this, others that against [him (that is, Paul)] in the

crowd; he, not able to know the surety for the uproar, com-. manded him to be brought into the fort. 35. And when he came upon the steps, it came to pass, that he was borne by the soldiers by reason of the force of the crowd. 36. For the multitude of the people followed, crying, Away with him. 37. And about to be brought into the fort, Paul says to the profect, Is it permitted me to say something to thee? he said. Dost thou understand Hellenic? 38. Art thou not then the Egyptian who before these days made a commotion, and led out into the wilderness four thousand men [avocas] of assassins? 39. But Paul said, I [emphatic] indeed am a Jewish man [ανθρωπος] of Tarsus, of Cilicia, of a not insignificant city a citizen: And I beseech thee, allow me to speak to the people. 40. And he having allowed him, Paul standing on the steps, beckoned with the hand to the people. And great silence coming, he spake to [them] in the Hebrew language, saying:

Chap. xxii. 1.—Men [avopes], brethren, and fathers, hear my answer now to you. 2. And hearing that he was speaking to them in the Hebrew language, they the more kept quietness. And he says, 3. I indeed am a man, a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but nourished up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, trained according to the exactness of the fatherly law, being [ὑπαρχων] a zealot of God, as all ye are to-day; 4. Who persecuted this way unto death, binding and giving into prisons both men [avopas] and women, 5. As also the High Priest witnesses to me, and all the company of elders ! from whom also having received letters to the brethren, I was going to Damascus to bring them that were there, bound to Jerusalem, that they might be punished. 6. But it came to pass to me, going and nearing Damascus, about mid-day, of a sudden there lightened from heaven a great light around me. 7. And I fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to may Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me! 8. But I [emphatic] answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said to me, E [emphatic] am Jesus the Nazarene whom thou persecutests.

9. And they that were with me the light indeed beheld and were put in fear, but the voice heard not of him speaking to me. 10. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Arise, go into Damascus, and there shall be spoken to thee concerning all [things] which are ordered thee to do. 11. And when I did not see for the brightness of that light, led by the hand by my companions, I came into Damascus. 12. But a certain Ananias, a man [avno] devout according to the law, well witnessed by all the Jews settled [there], 13. Coming to me and standing by, said to me, Brother Saul, look up. And I [emphatic] the same hour looked up upon him. 14. And he said, the God of our fathers made thee ready to know his will, and to see the Just and hear the voice of his mouth. 15. For thou shalt be witness to Him to all men [ανθρωπους], of what thou hast seen and heard. 16. And now what art thou about? Arise to be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling upon his name. 17. And it came to pass when I had returned to Jerusalem, and as I was praying in the temple [ἰερῷ] I became in a trance; 18. And saw Him saying to me, Hasten and go quickly out of Jerusalem: because they will not receive thy witness concerning me. 19. And I [emphatic] said, Lord, they [emphatic] understand that I [emphatic] was imprisoning and scourging throughout the synagogues them that believe on thee; 20. And when was shed forth the blood of Stephen thy witness. I was even standing by and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that were slaving him. 21. And He said to me, Go, for I [emphatic] will send thee out to the Gentiles afar. 22. And they heard him as far as this word. and lifted up their voice, saying, Away from the earth with such a man, for it is not right for him to live. 23. And as they were clamouring and casting [up] their garments, and throwing dust into the air, 24. The præfect commanded him to be brought into the fort, saying that he should be racked with scourges, that he might come to know for what reason they thus cried upon him. 25. And when they had stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion standing by.

Is it allowed you to securge a man [ardposeror], a Roman and unjudged? 26. And the centurion having heard, coming near announced to the profect, saying, What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman. 27. Then the profect coming near said to him, Tell me, art thou [emphatic] a Roman? He said, Yea. 28. And the profect answered, I [smphatic] for a great sum got this citizenship. And Paul said, But I [emphatic] am even [free] born. 29. Straightway then stood away from him they that were going to rack him. And the profect feared having come to know that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. 30. And on the morrow, purposing to know the certainty about what he was accused by the Jews, he loosed him, and commanded the chief priests and all the council to come together: and brieging Paul down, set him among them.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

VICARIOUSNESS OF GOSPEL PHILANTHROPY.

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."-Rom. ix. 3. THAT the feeling expressed in this remarkable passage was either felt prior to the apostle's conversion, or was a momentary ebullition afterwards, is a view of the passage which critics of a colder nature have endeavoured to maintain. But in doing this they have had to do much violence to the laws of language. Critics of every school, including Dean Alford, Dr. Wordsworth, and Mr. Jowett, are agreed, says Professor Plumptre, "that the words can mean nothing else than this: That for his brethren's sake, his kinsmen according to the flesh, St. Paul was willing to accept all that is involved in the thought of everlasting comdemnation, eternal separation from his Lord; yea, craved with a passionate earnestness that it might be so.". We take the words as expressing in the strongest way the vicariousness of Gospel philanthropy, and they suggest three ideas concerning it—

I. Its strong substitu-Paul TIONARY CRAVING. wishes here to suffer for the sake of his brethren. love is in a sense substitutionary. It suffers for others. It puts the soul of its possessor in the place of the loved sufferer, and makes it a conscious participator in the agony. The more love a being has in a world of suffering, the more vicarious agony he must endure. Love loads us with the infirmities and sorrows of all around. All loving and sympathetic natures are bearing about with them the griefs and sorrows of others; they weep with those that weep. Christ came here with an infinite love for the whole world; and by an eternal law of sympathy He suffered for the world. But there is, moreover, a craving in love to suffer instead of its object. Does not the mother desire to suffer instead of the babe that lies on the bed of anguish! Substitution of this kind is the law of love.

POWER. The Apostle not only desired to suffer instead of his brethren, but to suffer the greatest evil, to sacrifice his all for them. He desired to be Anathema from Christ. What does this involve? "Terrible enough," says the

eloquent author already quoted, "would have been that word Anathema, 'accursed from Christ,' if it had brought with it only the thoughts which a Jewish reader would have associated with it. To come under all the curses, dark and dread, which were written in the Book of the Law: to be cursed in waking and sleeping, going out and coming in, in buying and selling, in the city and in the field; to be shunned, hated as a Samaritan was hated, shut out from fellowship with all human society that had been most prized; from all kindly greeting of friends and neighbours. This was what he would have connected with the words as their least and lowest meaning. The Christian reader. possibly the Jewish also, would have gone yet further. The apostle's own words would have taught him to more. To be 'delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh; to come under sharp pain of body, supernaturally inflicted, and to feel that that excruciating agony or loathsome plague, was the deserved chastisement of a sin against truth and light, and to be shut out from all visible fellowship with the body of Christ, and therefore from all communion with Christ himself; to

be as in the outer darkness. while the guests were feasting in the illumined chamber, here too to be shunned by those who had been friends and brothers. would have been the Christian's thoughts as to excommunication in the apostolic age. But beyond all this, the Apostle found a deeper gulf and a more terrible sentence. To be anothema from Christ, cut off for ever from that eternal life which he had known as the truest and highest blessedness, sentenced for ever to that outer darkness. the wailing and gnashing of teeth - this was what he prayed for, if it might have for its result the salvation of his brethren."

Gospel love involves selfabnegation. Self sinks as love rises. Christ is the highest example. He loved us, and He gave Himself for us. Here is the cause and the effect. Love is the high priest of the soul; it offers the whole self.

III. Its soul-saving aim. Why did Paul wish to sacrifice himself? What was the grand object he had in view? The spiritual salvation of his countrymen. The vicarious love of the Gospel endures and craves sufferings, not merely or mainly to serve men materially and temporarily, but chiefly spiritually and sternally; to

save their souls. It counts no perils too great, no sufferings too distressing, no sacrifices too exacting, in order to redeem immortal spirits from ignorance, selfishness, worldliness, guilt, misery, hell.

THE PLACE WHERE GOD IS

"God is not in all his thoughts."
—Psa. x. 4.

God is everywhere. Heaven and earth are full of his presence. (Psa. cxxxix.) His presence suns immensity. And yet the text tells us where He is not, and that is in the thoughts of wicked "God is not in all their thoughts." (1.) This Q. patent fact. millions live from day to day, and year to year, and scarcely think of God. This is an astounding fact. It is unnatural, impious, and calamitous. Let us inquire for a moment into the reason. Why is God not in the thoughts of men?

I. NEGATIVELY. (1.) It is not because there can be any doubt in the human mind as to the importance of thinking about the Creator. All men must feel that the greatest Being ought to be thought upon most. There is no subject of thought so quickening, spiritualising, ennobling, and beatifying as God. (2.) It is

not because there is any want of the means of reminding men of God. All life is full of mementoes. All that is seen. or heard, or felt, is full of Him. (3.) It is not because of the unbroken regularity of the material world. true that Nature proceeds on her march without any deviation from her wonted path. "All things continue as they were from the beginning," &c. But this cannot be pleaded as a sufficient cause. Nature in heaven has an unbroken uniformity. Yet all minds there are full of Nature to the Jews in the desert, under Moses, and to the Jews in Palestine, under Christ, had striking miraculous interpositions, and yet the millions there did not (4.) Not think of God. because man has no consciousness of restraint in action. Man has the power of selfmotion. He moves whensoever and whithersoever he pleases, without any feeling of pressure from God. He does not feel the Divine finger checking or propelling him. But this is no just cause, for all holy souls are equally free from any consciousness of Divine pressure.

II. Positively. Why, then, do men exclude God from their thoughts? Here is the answer. They do "not like to retain God in their know-

ledge." The cause is in the heart. There are two things in the heart that exclude thoughts of Him. (1.) Fear. The guilty conscience assures the transgressor that he has offended his Maker, and that he justly deserves his everlasting displeasure. Thought recoils from the terrible. Fear repels thought. (2.) Dislike. If we fear a being we are sure to dislike him. Our imaginations invest him with unloveable and hideous attri-Those whom we dislike we exclude as much as possible from our thoughts. The subject teaches us-

First: The appalling wickedness of men. What can give us a more astonishing view of man's depravity than the fact that he excludes from his thoughts his Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, the greatest, best, and the most loving of beings? The only place from which man can exclude his Maker is his thought; and he avails himself of this terrible power. If he could banish the Eternal from his universe he would. Learn-

Secondly: The necessity of Christianity. What system can bring God into the world's thoughts? No system that does not remove from the human breast all dread and dislike of the Eternal. Christianity is the only system on

earth that can do this. It has done so in millions of instances, is doing so now, and will continue to do so until it has filled all human souls with God as the one dominant subject of thought, and the one grand object of affection.

MAN'S PLACE IN CHRISTIANITY.

"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire," &c. &c. But ye are come to Mount Sion," &c. &c.—Heb. xii. 18—24.

Or all the facts in the history of man, none so important as that which concerns his spiritual locus standi. His physical standing—his relation to the material world—is important. His social standing -his relation to his fellow men-is more so. His intellectual standing—his relation to the great world of truth is perhaps more so. But his spiritual standing—his relation to God and the spiritual universe— is infinitely more important than all. If his standing place is wrong here, he is wrong everywhere. a planet is right in relation to the sun, it will be right in relation to the whole system, We infer and the reverse. from this passage-

I. THAT MAN'S PLACE IN CHRISTIANITY IS RELATED MORE TO THE SPIRITUAL THAN MATERIAL. "Ye are

not come unto the mount be touched." that might Sinai, rugged, palpable 8. mountain, was the emblem of that religion to which the Jew was brought. Judaism was a religion as palpable by its many ceremonies as was Sinai. But that to which we are "come" in Christianity, is something that "cannot be touched" — the impalpable. the spiritual, the eternal. "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Christian men have to do with unseen, not with things that are seen, &c.

II. THAT MAN'S PLACE IN CHRISTIANITY IS RELATED TO THE ATTRACTIVE RATHER THAN THE TERRIBLE.

Mount Sinai is here described as a terrible thing. It burned with fire; there was blackness, and darkness, and tempest; there were trumpets and voices that echoed wrath No beast could touch it without instant death, and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." The religion of the Jews was a terrible religion; it was full of maledictions and judgments-not so the Christian religion. Mount Sion and the city of the living God are free from clouds and thunders. They are invested in charms, and inspire hope, and confidence, and trust. This subject presents a motive,

First: Forgratitude. How thankful should Christians be for being brought into such a benign and glorious system as this! A motive,

Secondly: For catholicity. Heaven is not for a sect. The city of the living God is for the good of all ages and all worlds. A motive,

Thirdly: For self-inquiry. "Are we come" to this system? How do we "come" to it? Not by mere birth, not by profession, but by a new creation in Christ Jesus. Heaven is not something in the future. If we are true Christians, we are come to it now. We are on the celestial mount, we are in the heavenly city, we are with the supernal intelligences, &c.

COMPANIONSHIP.

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me."—2 Tim. iv. 9—17.

Paul's nature was strongly and tenderly affectionate. Many of the passages in his letters to various churches, and the whole of his relationship to Timothy, strikingly prove this. He had by nature the capacity, and by character the right, of possessing many companions. This paragraph from a letter of his to his beloved Timothy, reminds us of some of his experiences as to companionships. This record of his feelings assures us,

I. HUMAN COMPANIONSHIPS ARE VERY NECESSARY. ear thirsts for a friend's voice: the heart hungers for a friend's Occasional solitude is a blessing; constant solitariness would be a crushing curse. All men, therefore, seek companionships. So even does Paul, intellectual and moral giant though he be. Hence how eagerly does he entreat Timothy to come to him at once-"Do thy utmost," &c.

II. HUMAN COMPANION-SHIPS ARE VERY CHANGING. All the men whose names are here mentioned by Paul had been in the inner or outer circles of Paul's companionship; but how scattered and separated his companions are at the time he writes! Of the eight here brought before us, only one with was Paul. Some had gone to far-off places-Thessalonica, Ephesus, &c. Others—Demas and Alexander, wherever their bodies were—were leagues distant from Paul in spirit. Such is but an instance of the changes continually transpiring in companionships. Such changes are caused by distance, death, depravity.

III. HUMAN COMPANION-SHIPS ARE OFTEN GREAT BLES-SINGS. (1.) Luke was with This must have been a deep joy to the aged prisoner. For Luke, his future biographer, was so intimately familiar with his life, that he could keenly sympathize with him; and, better still, he was so intimately familiar with the Saviour's life, as one of biographers, that his memories must have been the richest converse to which Paul could have listened. Besides. Luke was a cultured man—a physician; and to an educated man like Paul, this must have greatly enhanced his worth as a companion. (2.) Mark was to be brought to him. There had been a time when Paul had differed with Barnabas concerning Mark, but now Paul saw reason to believe that he would be of

service to the cause of Christ. so he welcomes him to his companionship. (3.) Timothy was coming to him. He could serve Paul by bringing the "cloak," the "book," the "parchments." Such-like service no candid man will affect to despise. But far higher joy would Timothy's companion-He was Paul's ship yield. son in the Gospel. No ties tender, sacred, more lasting, than those of such relationship.

IV. HUMAN COMPANION-SHIPS SOMETIMES PROVE GREAT It must have AFFLICTIONS. been on a tear-blotted leaf that Paul wrote "Demas hath forsaken me," &c. tears fell because sin had caused the separation. Alexander, too, once in the Church with Paul, grieved him now by becoming a false witness against him. So is it always. Men suffer most when "wounded in the house of their friends."

V. Human companionships must sometimes fail us. Paul, waiting now the second stage of his Roman trial, had only one old companion, Luke, with him, Worse still, at the first stage "no man stood byhim, but all forsook him." There are often in men's lives crises when old companions forsake them. They are sometimes scared by poverty, failure, shame. But

besides this, there are times when the truest companions must fail. Companionship can do little in our intense bodily pain, mental anguish, spiritual conflict, throes of death. "In the central depths

of our being we are alone." Happy is he who can say of such times, "Nevertheless, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me."

Bristol. U. R. T.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. XCIV.)

THE LIGHTS OF SOULS.

"The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out."—Prov. xiii. 9.

"Light," if not essential to life, is essential to its well-being. Life without light, could it be, would be cold, chaotic, wretched. There are different kinds of light even in the material world—some feeble, flickering, transient, others as the lights of heaven, strong, steady, permanent. There are different moral lights—the lights of soul. The text leads us to consider two:—

I. THE JOYOUS LIGHT OF SOUL. "The light of the righteous rejoiceth." In what does the light of the soul consist? There are at least three elements-faith, hope, love. The first fills the soul with the light of ideas; the second with the light of a bright future; the third, with the light of happy affections. In all souls on earth these three exist. There is a faith in all, a hope in all, a love in all. Extinguish these in any soul, and there is the blackness of darkness for ever. The righteous have these as divine impartations, as beams

from "the Father of lights," and in their radiance they live, walk, and rejoice. They rejoice in their faits. Their faith connects them with the Everlasting Sun. They rejoice in their hope. Their hope bears them into the regions of the blest. They rejoice in their love. Their love fixes their enrapturing gaze on Him in whose presence there is fullness of joy.

II. THE TRANSIENT LIGHT OF soul. "The lamp of the wicked shall be put out." It is implied that the light of the righteous is permanent. And so it is. is inextinguishable. "It shines brighter and brighter, even unto perfect day." Not so the light of the wicked. Their light, too, is in their faith, their hope, their love. But their faith is in the false, and it must give way. temple of their hope is built on sand, and the storm of destiny will destroy it. Their love is on corrupt things, and all that is corrupt must be burnt by the all-consuming Thus the fire of eternal justice. lamp of the wicked must be put out. The light of the righteous is an inextinguishable sun-that of the wicked a mere flickering "lamp;" the breath of destiny will put it out. "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out." To live in a world without a sun, were it possible, would be wretched existence—such a world as Byron desoribes:—

"The bright sun was extinguished, and the stars

Did wander darkening in the eternal

Rayless and pathless; and the icy earth Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air."

But to live without faith, hope, charity, is infinitely more calamitous.

(No. XCV.)

PRIDE.

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well-advised is wisdom."
—Prov. xiii. 10.

Pride is an exaggerated estimate of our own superiority, leading often to an insolent exultation. "There is no such thing," says Fuller, "as proper pride, a reasonable and judicious estimate of one's character has nothing to do with it." From the text we learn—

Тнат I. PRIDE GENERATES DISCORDS. "Only by pride cometh contention." "Pride," says Collier, " is so unsociable a vice, and does all things with so ill a grace, that there is no closing with it. A proud man will be sure to challenge more than belongs to You must expect him stiff in conversation, fulsome in commending himself, and bitter in his reproofs." And Colton says, "Pride either finds a desert or makes one; submission cannot tame its ferocity, nor satisfy or fill its voracity, and it requires very costly food—its keeper's happiness." Being in society essentially exacting, insolent, heartless, detracting, it is ever generating "contention."

II. THAT PRIDE REJECTS COUN-

sels. This is implied in the last clause rather than expressed. "But with the well-advised is wisdom." The proud man is too great to take the counsel of any. "Pride," says Gurnell, "takes for its motto great *I*, and little you." Who can teach him?

"Pride (of all others, the most dangerous fault)
Proceeds from want of sense or want of

thought.
The men who labour and digest things most,
Will be much apter to despond than

boast;
For if your author be profoundly good,
'Twill cost you dear before he's understood.''

(No. XCVI.)

WORLDLY WEALTH.

"Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase."—Prov. xiii. 11. This verse implies three things—

I. THAT WORLDLY WEALTH IS A GOOD THING. (1.) The universal feeling of man shows this—all (2.) The men strive after it. services it can render show this. Man's physical comforts, intellectual opportunities, social resources, and the progress of his religious institutions greatly depend upon this. (3.) The Word of God shows this. "Money," " answers says Solomon, "answers all things." The Bible does not despise wealth. It legislates for its employment and denounces its abuse. We infer-

II. THAT WEALTH MAY BE OBTAINED IN DIFFERENT WAYS. There are two ways referred to in the text. First: The way of vanity." Wealth gotten by vanity." The word vanity may represent all those tricks of trade, reckless speculations, and idle gambling, by which large fortunes are often casily gained. Within our own circle of acquaintance, we know many who have become millionaires by happy hits.

Secondly: The way of labour."
"He that gathereth by labour."
Honest, industrious, frugal labour, is the legitimate way to wealth. Honest industry is God's road to fortune. We infer—

III. THAT THE DECREASE OR INCREASE OF WEALTH IS DETERMINED BY THE METHOD IN WHICH IT HAS BEEN OBTAINED. "The wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase." Two facts in human nature will illustrate this principle.

First: What man does not highly valus he is likely to squander. That which we hold cheaply we are not cautious in guarding nor tenacious

in holding.

Secondly: What comes to him without labour he is not likely highly to appreciate. We generally value a thing in proportion to the difficulty in getting it. The man who has toiled hard for what he has got, will take care of it; whereas he who has got it easily by a hit or by a trick, treats it with less caution, and is more likely to squander it away. Thus the text announces a law in human experience: "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.

Brothers, whilst we would not have you to disparage wordly wealth, we would not have you put it in its wrong place. Use it as the instrument of action, not as the representative of wealth or the source of happiness.

"To purchase heaven, has gold the power?

Can gold remove the mortal hour?
In life, can love be bought with gold?
Are Friendship's pleasures to be sold?
No; all that's worth a wish, a thought,
Pair Virtue gives unbribed, unbought.
Cease, then, on trash thy hopes to bind;
Let nobler views engage thy mind."

Јонивои.

(No. XCVII.) HOPE DEFERRED.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."—Prov. xiii. 12.

Hore is a complex state of mind—desire and expectation are its constituents. We define it as an expectant desire. It implies the existence of a future good, and a belief in the possibility of obtaining it.

The text leads us to make three

remarks concerning it.

I. THAT MAN'S OBJECT OF HOPE IS OFTEN LONG DELAYED. "Hope deferred." The future good which men hope for they seldom get at once. Long years of struggle-often intervene. It looms a far distant thing before their vision. There is kindness in this arrangement, although we may fail sometimes to see it.

First: It serves to stimulate effort. It is the goal before the eye of the racer, keeping every muscle on the

stretch.

Secondly: It serves to culture patience. We have need of patience. If what we hope for came at once, was not deferred, not a tithe of our manhood would be brought out.

II. THAT THE DELAY IS GENERALLY VERY TRYING. "It maketh the heart sick." It is trying to the strength, to the temper, and to the religion of man. Still, those "sick" men will not give up the hope. "Hope," says Diogenes, "is the last thing that dies in man." Pandora's fabled box contained all the miseries of mankind, and when her husband took off its lid, all rushed away, but hope remained at the bottom. Ay, hope sticks to the last. However sick at heart, we hold it still.

"The wretch condemned with life to

part, Still, still on hope relies; And every pang that rends the heart Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light, Adorns and cheers the way, And still, the darker grows the night, Emits a brighter ray."

III. THAT THE TRIAL OF THE DBLAY IS FULLY COMPENSATED IN ITS REALIZATION. "When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life." The longer and more anxiously you wait and toil for a good, the higher the enjoyment when it is grasped. Hence the delight of Simeon. who waited for the consolation of Israel when he clasped the infant Jesus in his arms, and said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." A realized divine hope is, indeed, "a tree of life," and especially so when realized in the pure heavens of God. Hope in fruition is the Eden of the soul.

"Oh! how blest
To look from this dark prison to that
shrine,
To inhale one breath of Paradise divine;
And enter into that eternal rest
Which waits the sons of God."

BOWRING.

(No. XCVIII.)

THE WORD.

"Whose despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded."—Prov. wiii. 13.

THE world abounds with words. Every day the air is loaded with oral words; the libraries of the world are crowded with written ones. Some human words are unspeakably more valuable than others. The word that expresses the noblest heart, the strongest intellect, the loftiest genius, the highest intelligence, is the best human word on earth. A human word is at once the mind's mirror, and the mind's weapon. In it the soul of the speaker is seen, and by it the soul of the speaker wins its victorics over others. But there is one word on earth incomparably and infinitely above all others. It is emaphatically the word—the word of God. text teaches us two things concerning this word.

I. This word despised is RUIN. "Who despiseth the word shall be destroyed." Who is the despiser of this word? scorner, the rejector, the unbeliever, the neglector, the trifler. Why is ruin involved in despising this word? First: Because he who despises, rejects the only instrument of soul-salvation. Gospel is the word of salvation. "Unto you is the word of the salvation sent." The only word that can save. It is the only balm for the diseased soul. It is the only quickening power for the dead. Second: Because he who despises it brings on his nature the condemnation of Heaven. Most tremendous guilt is contracted in despising this word. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not,' &c. (Heb. xii. 25.)

II. THIS WORD REVERENCED IS "He that fear-BLESSEDNESS. eth the commandment shall be rewarded." The word is a "commandment," it is an authoritative utterance, and to fear it, in a scriptural sense, is to have a proper practical regard for it. First: Such a man is rewarded in its blessed influences upon his own soul. It enlightens, purifies, cheers, ennobles. Second: Such a man is rewarded with the appro-"Unto that bation of Heaven. man will I look, who his of a broken heart, and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." What a wonderful thing is the word! Man's character and destiny are determined by his conduct toward it. How few treat this word as it ought to be treated in this age. In proportion to its aboundings, men seem to despise it. There was a time, in Edward the First's reign, when volume cost £37, to gain which, a labouring man would have to work fifteen long years.

(No. XCIX.)

THE LAW OF THE GOOD.

"The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

—Prov. xiii. 14.

I. THE GOOD ARE RULED BY LAW. "The law of the wise." What is law? There are many definitions; many most unphilosophic, some most conflicting. The clearest and most general idea I have of it is-rule of motion. In this sense all things are under law, for all things are in motion. The material universe is in motion, and there is the law that regulates it. The spiritual universe is in motion, and law presides over it. "Of law, says Hooker, there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice he harmony of the world. All things do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition seever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy." But what is the law of the goodthat which rules them in all their activities? Supreme love to the supremely good. It is not a written commandment, but an all-pervading, inspiring spirit, called in Scripture, "the royal law," the "law of liberty," the "law of the Spirit."

II. THE LAW THAT RULES THE GOOD IS BENEFICENT. "The law of the wise is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death." First: This law delivers from death. The word death here must not be regarded as the separation of body from soul, but as the separation of the soul from God. is the awfullest death, and supremelove to God is a guarantee against this. Secondly: This law secures an abundance of life. "The law of the wise is a fountain of life;" a fountain gives the idea of activity, plenitude, perennialness. The law of the good is happiness. The happiness of the true soul is not something then and yonder, but it is something in the law that controls him. In the midst of his privations dangers, John Howard, England's illustrious philanthropist, wrote from Riga these words, "I hope I have sources of enjoyment that depend not on the particular spot I inhabit. A rightly cultivated mind, under the power of religion, and the exercise of beneficent dispositions, affords a ground of satisfaction little affected by heres and theres."

"If solid happiness we prize,
Within our breast this jewel lies;
The world has nothing to bestow,—
From our own selves our joy must flow."

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

THE GREAT PROPITIATION.

Replicant.—In answer to Querist No. 16, p. 352, Vol. XVII., and continued from p. 237, Vol. XX.

Let us now consider:

III. The atonement of Christ as explained by the theory of substitution.

There is no explanation which is more popular among what are called Evangelical Christians than this; and, in fact, no explanation is supposed to be satisfactory, unless it embraces the idea of substitution.

Let us suppose the existence of an imaginary ideal man, representing the human race; a man in whom every other man finds himself fairly and fully mirrored. As some men are thieves, the ideal man must be a thief; and for a similar reason must he be guilty of every crime and vile deed and purpose of which any member of the human race is

guilty. God, as a just ruler of the universe, must punish every form of transgression, and, therefore, must the eternal wrath come down in showers upon the guilty head of this ideal man. sword of justice is unsheathed, and God, the righteous King of all, is about to plunge it in the sinner's heart. But just at this point, according to the theory of substitution, Jesus Christ comes forward and offers to enter the sinner's place. God is to regard Him as if He were a sinner, though He is innocent, and to deal to Him the fatal stroke. The ideal, representative man, moves out of his place, and Christ enters the place of danger, when in a moment God strikes the victim, and the innocent suffers for the guilty, or *instead* of the guilty.

As it would be wrong to punish the innocent, it is supposed that, by agreement, Christ is reckoned guilty. This, of course, is not true, as He is innocent, but is mentioned as a legal fiction. How that fiction may act upon God-how He can look at things in any way except as they are, it is difficult to explain, and these theorists seldom care about explanation. In ninety-nine pullits out of every hundred, in the Church and among the leading Dissenters, denominations of throughout the British this is represented as the Gospel.

I heard one of the most popular preachers of the day put the matter thus, in commenting on the words: "He tasted death for every man." He said, "You and I were at the bar of justice, and Justice (i.e., God as a just being) was there to enforce his demands. There we stood with the cup of poison in our Justice (i.e., God as a just being) insisted on our drinking the last drop. But Jesus then appeared in the room, and He said, 'may I drink it for them?' God consented, and the Saviour took our cups of poison from our hands, and, blessed be his name, He drained them all." sermon was on the crucifixion. and those scenes were painted up. which made one feel as if he had been to see a public execution at

Newgate. The impression produced by the discourse, as a whole, was, that Jesus Christ was a most kind being, but as for God, He was just like the Jew in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," heartless and exacting—would have his pound of flesh. Had the sermon been preached to men of mind, or even savages who had not been intellectually blinded by their education, some would have shouted the praise of Christ, and all would have disapproved of God: but these Christians in England seem, at the time, to think of Christ's love alone, so that the unmerciful nature of God, as represented in the discourse, has not the same power of destroying souls by leading them to hate Him. Yet these notions, which make it impossible to love God, because they deprive Him of every loveable quality, are supposed to be the Gospel, which, on the contrary, shows God's love to man.

Many suppose the substitution of Christ to have a reference to the punishment of sin, and yet it is not supposed that the punishment which He endured was the same as that which should have fallen upon the sinner. This is manifestly a fault in the theory.

Some of these theorists are of opinion that our Lord not only. was treated as a sinner, but actually that He became a sinner. Luther expresses himself thus:— "And this, no doubt, all the prophets did foresee in spirit, that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, and blasphemer, that ever was or could be in the world. If it be not absurd to confess and believe that Christ was crucified between two thieves, then it is not absurd to say that He was accursed, and of all sinners the greatest."—Luther on Gal. iii. 13.

Dr. Candlish, in that book of

his, entitled, "The Fatherhood of God,"-in which the most glorious subject within the reach of a creature's thought is made the most meaningless fiction upon which any bewildered imaginafallen — speaks of has our Lord's work and character thus:-"He becomes one of us. one with us, as fallen creatures, guilty, corrupt, condemned." (P. 93.) "The incarnation of the Son of God is his entering into our relation to God, as a relation involving guilt to be answered for, and the wrath and curse of God to be endured." (P. 95.)

The theory of substitution infollowing particuvolves the lars:-1. That Christ offered to God to suffer punishment equal to that which man, as a sinner, or all men, as sinners, deserved. 2. That God accepted this offer, though He knew that the innocent, and not the guilty, would suffer; and, 3. That He inflicted on Christ a punishment equal to that which all guilty men deserved. These particulars enter into every conception of the theory of substitution, but in some this also is involved-4. That Christ became a sinner—that by submitting to be treated as a murderer, He became guilty of murder. If this had been possible, then the punishment He endured would be only what He deserved on his own account.

Let us now examine the ground of this theory. Is there any foundation for this idea in either Scripture or reason? The whole Scriptural argument turns upon the meaning of the word, "for," in such expressions as these, "Christ died for us," "died for the ungodly." &c. These expressions, it is said, denote that Christ died in our place—died in the place of the ungodly. And yet there is confessedly no foundation for this, but the ambiguous meaning of the word for—inep. I have fully dis-

cussed the meanings of this word before. (See Homilist.) Even if it be granted that $i\pi\epsilon\rho$ (for), means, in some cases, "in the place of," it must be confessed that in many cases it means "on account of," and "for the good of," &c. Hence, it is manifest that no stress can be put on the meaning of $i\pi\epsilon\rho$, for. Thus, the Scriptural argument for the idea of substitution vanishes into thin air.

It fares no better in the province of reason, for then, God and Christ must be different parties, one punishing, and one being punished; and if each be God, you have two Gods, one inflicting pain upon the other. This is the old Pagan Mythology

revived.

The Scriptures speak much of the forgiveness of sin. No one can read the words of either prophets or apostles, without being struck with the importance attached by them to this glorious doctrine; but if sin has been punished, no matter how, or when, or where, if sin has been punished according to law, whether in the sinner or in the substitute, it matters not, then it cannot be forgiven. The forgiveness of sin is a mere fiction, and if these theorists are right, the sacred writers must have been lost in hopeless error. For one, I would rather accept the errors of inspired men than the theories of substitutionists.

There is yet another difficulty in relation to this theory, which seems to many thoughtful minds insurmountable—a difficulty involved in this question: Is it right—as a matter of mere justice—is it right, on any condition, or under any circumstances whatever, to punish the innocent for the guilty? "Oh!" says Bishop Trench, and others, "this world is full of vicarious sufferings." That may be, but the examples given are nothing to the point.

My friend may become a debtor through his own folly, and I may deprive myself of comforts to pay it for him. But this case is no parallel to the work of Christ, for the latter is an arrangement accepted by a government, the former is the isolated act of an If I asked Justice individual. if I might pay the debt, Justice would reply, No. In my act I go beyond justice; but Christ is represented by the theory of substitution, as agreeing with Justice to die instead of man. might prevent a man from going to prison by paying the fine imposed upon him by the magistrates, but if he be sentenced to go to prison, at the assize, no substitution I can offer will be accepted.

Now, if Justice demands the punishment of sin, does it not equally demand its punishment in the transgressor? Nay, it seems to me that Justice seeks the sinner rather than the sin; the sin is sought only to regulate the measure of the punishment. It must be carefully remembered in all these considerations that there is an essential difference, too, between being punished for crime, and being the victim of misfor-

tune.

Let me take a case—a case exactly in point-which will show the absurdity of the theory of substitution. Dr. Pritchard poisoned his wife and her mother in the most brutal and unmanly way, and for the vilest purpose. He deserved no pity. He had a daughter -his eldest child-who clung to him to the last. Neither his crime. nor his cruelty, nor his degradation, could either break or slacken the cords of affection which bound her heart to his. Now, supposing that previous to his execution, this kind daughter had offered to be executed in his stead, would it have been right on the part of the Crown to have accepted of this voluntary substitute? Would the death of that innocent child beneath the gallows have been an act of justice, or rather of villany? Would the Government which accepted of such a substitute have been honoured by it or disgraced? Suffice it to say, that there are many men whose consciences could no more justify such an act of substitution than a positive act of marder. The acceptance of Christ, the innocent, as a substi-

tute for man, the criminal, is a case in every way parallel.

case in every way parallel.

When we speak of God punishing sin, we begin at the wrong end. It is the sinner that justice seeks to punish, and therefore it is blasphemy against the government of God—against God as the Governor of the universe, to suppose that He would agree that the innocent should be punished in place of the guilty.

GALILEO. (To be continued.)

Literary Aotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS. By THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D. Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate-hill.

This volume is an eloquent and practical discourse, founded on the words, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The leading doctrines, animating spirit, and general style of the distinguished author are too well known to require explanation, and too much valued to require our commending. This we consider one of the most useful of his many useful works. It teems with very noble thoughts: it beats with a manly heart: it has many strokes of mighty eloquence; and abounds with characteristic illustrations.

DISCOURSES BY THE LATE REV. DAVID DUNCAN. With a Memoir of his Life. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co.

This is a volume of posthumous sermons, edited by the brothers of the departed author, and are selected, we are told, from those preached in the ordinary course of his ministry. The discourses, though destitute of any great originality, striking illustrations, or eloquent passages, are well thought out, clearly and vigorously expressed, and, in all, stiffly orthodox. They will be prized not only by the intelligent members of his bereaved congregation, but by all who wish to see Calvinian doctrines presented with fervour and force.

Liff's Work as it is. By a Colonist. London: Sampson Low and. Co., Milton House, Ludgate-hill.

This book is written in order to correct the false impressions concerning Australia. The views it gives of Australian civilization, resources, and life are most tempting to those whom poverty crushes in Old England. It is a book full of interest and information.

THE NATIONAL ENCYCLOPÆDIA: A DICTIONARY OF UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE. By WRITERS OF EMINENCE in Literature, Science, and Art. Vol. IX. METHODISM—PEDUNCLE. London and Glasgow: Wm. Mackenzie.

We have from time to time recorded our hearty commendation of the "National Encyclopædia." The nine volumes which are now before our readers quite justify what we have said, and embody our best anticipations. We have subjected them to examination, and are bound to say that they are beyond impeachment on the ground of careful accuracy and literary excellence. The treatment of the different subjects evinces unflagging diligence, a proper acquaintance with the bearing of the last discoveries upon them, and a good, lucid, terse, expository style. The mechanical details are also unexceptionable. The paper, printing, binding, are all of the highest class. The type is extremely neat and legible. The exceeding cheapness of the work has not been used as an excuse for a meagre or careless execution. It will bear inspection from every point of view; and the verdict which even a fastidious critic will pronounce will be, that it is an ornament and a treasure to his library shelves. We have already taken occasion to remark on the great value, particularly to students and young ministers, of works of this class. We need, therefore, add nothing on that head. It only remains for us to suggest that those to whom we offered those observations would do well to avail themselves of the very eligible opportunity which they now possess of carrying them into effect.

HANDY BOOK ON THE LAW AND PRACTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS. By JAMES WALTER SMITH, LL.D. Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange.

The erudite barrister who is the compiler of this little work, is well known as having given to the public a series of legal "Handy Books," that are most valuable, and have become deservedly popular. This one, treating of the "law and practice of public meetings," has already had a very large sale, and both from its subject and the lucid and authoritative treatment of it, is destined to a wide and lasting circulation. Few men have more to do with public meetings than ministers, and therefore we especially recommend to our readers this only, and at the same time amply sufficient, manual on the subject.

RITUALISM, AND ITS RELATED DOGMAS. By the REV. E. MELLOR, M.A. London: John Snow and Co., 2, Ivy-lane, Paternosterrow. 1867.

IDOLATEISS, OLD AND NEW, THEIR CAUSE AND CURE. By JAMES BALDWIN BROWN, B.A. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27. Paternoster-row.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP VERSUS CEREMONIALISMS. An Address. By Rev. H. D. Bowen. Brentwood: W. Carden.

THERE is a certain number of ministers in all denominations, and of all mental types, from the least to the greatest, who feel that they must have a say upon every question, little or great, that excites some amount of popular interest. Colenso writes a book, and their pulpits ring with denunciations-Renan comes into the field of literature, and makes a deliverance, and ministers, some of whom understood not the language he wrote, and were utterly incapable of appreciating his argument, fulminated at him without mercy. Brother Ignatius appears on the scene, and excites a stir among the old women of both sexes, by his ritualistic nonsense, and men, some of whom are amongst the ablest of English preachers, feel it their duty to take up the question of Ritualism. Thus from time to time reviewers have their tables loaded with discourses on these questions of the hour. We do not say all this is wrong-far from it; but we do think that there is a far higher work for Christian ministers to do than this. To prove that certain men and sects are erroneous in doctrine, or ceremony, is not preaching that Gospel which is "spirit and life." As to ritualism, what is it but the costume with which religious people clothe their religious ideas and feelings, and costume is a simple matter of taste, and what argument can change taste—the sensuousness in thought and feeling will have the sensuous in form. If the Baptist will express his faith by going under the water, the Pædobaptist by sprinkling, the Quaker by his broad-brim, and some Churchmen by certain genuflections, robements, candles, and such things, why should I quarrel with their ritualism? It is a matter of taste, and taste is a matter of organization, and organization cannot be changed by discussion. We have all our ritualism, and we cannot get on without it. These remarks are suggested by the works before us, and many others on the same question now on our table, which we cannot notice. Mr. Mellor's book is decidedly the best we have seen on the subject. subjects he discusses are—the Christian ministry not a priesthood, nor an apostolic succession-baptism not regeneration, nor the Lord's table an altar. These are confessedly vital points, and are here handled with great discrimination and ability. The work of Mr. Brown is on the same subject, under a more taking title. It will repay perusal. Mr. Bowen's address is also an able one, and touches the heart of the question.

MINISTRES, WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD. A Sermon, Preached before the Bible Christian Conference, in Stamford-street Chapel, Landport, Portsmouth. London: G. Y. Stevenson, 54, Paternoster-row.

This is a discourse of no ordinary merit. There are but few men in any church that could produce its equal. The author is well versed in the science of man, and takes a wide view of the Gospel of Christ. His thoughts are philosophic; his spirit reverent and catholic; his language clear, terse, and telling.

THE SCHOOL SINGING BOOK; arranged and compiled by F. Weber, Resident Organist of the German Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.

This convenient little work contains thirty-three two-part songs, of various origin and character, with an ad libitum, accompaniment for the piano or harmonium, which in most of the pieces may also be sung by tenor and bass voices, so as to change them into four-part songs. It is prefaced by seven introductory elementary exercises. Mr. Weber is of opinion that singing at an early age is not only harmless, but actually promotes health, by gently exercising and strengthening the lungs; also, that it furthers discipline and address. This work has been prepared by him for the use of young pupils and schools. He has selected those songs which will charm, and cannot fail to be retained by the memory; and his task generally has been performed in a very skilful and creditable manner.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHORAL BOOK. By F. WEBER. London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co.

This selection contains eighty-three new and seventeen popular old tunes, adapted to the psalm and hymn books of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. They form a very excellent collection. Many of the very best hymn tunes have been harmonised by Mr. Weber, and are here given, together with some pleasing and useful tunes composed by him. In this, as in the other book by Mr. Weber, to which we have directed attention, we recognise the services of a careful teacher and a highly cultured musician.

COMING WONDERS, Expected between 1867 and 1875. London: S.W. Partridge, Paternoster-row.

This volume belongs to a class of works which we regard, in the main, as unscriptural in doctrine, presumptuous in spirit, perverse in logic, Judaizing and pernicious in tendency. We have tried to read this book, but cannot. The rubbish is revolting.



AHOMILY

Biblical Monotheism.

"I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God."—Isa. xliv. 6.

N the service in "The Biblical Liturgy," which we have read together this morning, we met with the doctrine of monotheism. We are taught in the clearest way not only that there is one God, and one God only, but who that one God really is. As to this, the sublimest utterance of Scripture, we offer three preliminary remarks—

First: It is supported by the structure and order of nature. So far as the universe has come within the sweep of scientific observation and research, it appears as one complete whole. All its parts are beautifully harmonised; all its forces are nicely balanced. Nature has no contradiction in her utterances, no jarring in her orchestra, no deviations from her original habits and ways; her march is stately and unswerving. The same causes, under the same circumstances, produce evermore the same effects. Nature, as a temple, has endless

* This work contains upwards of twenty services, each of which contains a collection of scriptures upon the leading doctrines of Christian theology, didactically and devotionally arranged. It is used every Sunday morning in Stockwell Congregational Church.

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sections and compartments, yet the whole is manifestly the draft of one architect, the work of one artificer. Nature, as a machine, is wondrously complicated, with wheels within wheels, yet the whole is obviously the invention of one intellect, the arrangement of one mind. On the front of the grand fabric of the universe there appears, in bold, clear, imperishable characters, the declaration, "there is but one God." The declaration in the text is—

Secondly: In direct antagonism to certain prevalent opinions. It is opposed to atheism, which declares there is no God; that whatever is, has either always been, or else was produced by chance—to feticism, the worship of any material object that a capricious superstition may select—to polytheism, which holds the plurality of gods—and to pantheism, which regards nature as identical with deity, and thus destroys a divine personality. The text gives the lie to all such miserable theories and inventions. The declaration in the text is,—

Thirdly: Accepted as a fundamental truth in all evangetical churches. There is a class of men professing faith in the Bible, who call themselves Unitarians. They have no more right to assume that name than have evangelical believers. No orthodox church believes in a plurality of deities. They believe in one God, and in one Lord Jesus Christ. Monotheism is the religion of Christendom. But our object in this discourse is briefly to consider the practical uses of Biblical monotheism.

I. It reveals the greatness of the Creator. Survey this wondrous universe. Gaze upon the vast, and examine the minute in the clearest and broadest light of modern science, and what do you see—wisdom? Yes, manifold wisdom—in every blade and insect, as well as in every intellect, world, and system. All this wisdom is the product of one mind. The archetypes of all you see existed once in one intelligence. He had no "counsellor to instruct Him." Do you see goodness? Yes, like an ever-flowing tide, overflowing

all, streaming in every ray of light-breathing in all life, beating in all pulsations, giving a happy glow and a beauteous form to all things. All this goodness is an emanation from one heart, the eternal fountain of all life. Do you see power? In rearing the stupendous fabrics, building up the mountains, pouring out the oceans, stretching out the heavens, moulding, adjusting, burnishing, propelling the worlds and systems that fill immensity. The hand of one being did the whole. It was God Himself formed the earth, and made it; He hath established it. Do you see wealth in all this? If you attach value to one acre of earth, what is the value of the globe? But what is the earth to the universe? A leaf to the forest. A sand grain to the shores, over which all oceans roll. There is but one proprietor of all this wealth. He can say, "all is mine; the sea is mine; the earth is mine; the heavens are mine; all souls are mine; the souls of the father and son are mine." Oh, if there be but one God, how great must be e! All nations are nothing to Him, and less than nothing, and vanity. "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee!" Another practical use of this glorious fact is.

II. IT REVEALS THE DEFINITENESS OF MORAL OBLIGATION. Deep in the souls of all men is the sense of duty. It may be deadened, but it can never be killed, never be eradicated. Hence, thoughtful men in every age have earnestly inquired into the principles of moral obligation, and very numerous, and often conflicting theories have come forth as the result. Some have propounded one standard of virtue, and some another. My definition of virtue is this—"following a right rule from a right motive." From this the question starts; what is the rule? Clearly, if there be but one God, the will of that one God must be the rule. What is the motive? Clearly, if there be but one God, supreme love to that one

God must be the motive. Were there a plurality of gods, there would be a difficulty to find out what virtue is; we should have to determine whose will to obey—the will of each, or some, or all. And we should also have to find out who of all the Gods we should love the most. But as there is but one God, our duty becomes definite, and clear as day." His will alone is supreme law. He alone demands supreme regard. The Bible urges this argument. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Know therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else. Thou shalt keep, therefore, his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for ever." Another practical use of this glorious fact is,-

III. IT REVEALS THE FITNESS OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTI-TUTION OF THE SOUL. There are three psychological facts that scarcely admit of disputation, and that every preacher of the Gospel should ever practically recognise in his discourses. (1.) The human heart has a centralizing tendency. Deep in our emotional nature is a craving for some one object on which to place entire confidence, and centre the deepest love. soul, like the planet, is made for a centre; it requires some thing on which to hang as its chief support-something to circle round as its glory—something to serve by reflecting its attributes and transmitting its influence. There is not a soul whose love does not point to some one object, as the needle to the pole. (2.) The moral character of the soul depends upon its central object. By a law of our nature we become like that we most love. Love is a transfiguring force. It moulds us to the character of its object. He who loves the character of the devil becomes like him. He who loves God becomes; partaker of the divine nature. (3.) The soul's happiness is determined by the character of the object most loved. All

experience shows that most of our happiness and misery comes out of our supreme love. He that loves supremely a faithless, worthless, suffering, dying object, must inevitably suffer sooner or later. Elsewhere we have shown that the object of supreme love, to make us happy, must be supremely excellent, always blessed, ever reciprocating our affection, and continuing with us without end. These are the eternal conditions of human happiness, and this one God is necessary to the fulfilment. Thus it is that all in every age who have loved the one God supremely, have felt with the Psalmist who said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

IV. IT REVEALS THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF SOULS. To us, says Paul, "There is but one God, the Father of all things, and we in him." It seems to me that spirits stand in a different relation to God to what material existences do. God is the Creator of matter, God is the Father of souls. "We are his offspring"—the highest seraph in eternity as well as the poorest child on earth. Between souls and God there is an essential resemblance and a voluntary reciprocity. Those of his offspring who have always been obedient, feel and recognise their brotherhood and are banded together with the tenderest feelings of love. They look on each other through their love for their one Father, and feel the vast universe their Father's house. Men, alas! have proved wayward and rebellious children. Humanity is the lost sheep that has gone away from the ninety and nine in the great fold, the prodigal that has left the Father's house. Because they have proved disobedient to their Father, they have lost the true spirit of brotherhood among themselves, and discords, contentions, and battlings are the result. What a moral anomaly in the universe is war! Children of the same father burning with mutual malice, and earnest in

mutual murder. What shall end this? What shall annihilate all the unkind feelings of men towards their race, what shall generate the loving spirit of brotherhood? Nothing but a common love for the one Father can do it. He who loves not God as his Father, will never love his fellow-men as brethren. Piety is the parent of philanthropy. Religion is the inspirer of human brotherhood. Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

V. IT REVEALS THE WONDERFUL IN MEDIATION. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is love passing knowledge. First: What a disparity between Him who loves and they who are loved! What a disparity in natures! God, the Almighty, the Allwise, the Eternal. Man, the feeble, the ignorant, and the dying. What a disparity in character! God the Essence and Fountain of all holiness. Man, vile and polluted with sin. Secondly: What a manifestation of the greatness of his love. He so loved the world that He gave what? A world the system, the universe? No, all this is nothing compared to what He gave—He gave his only begotten Son. "Herein is love." I see divine love everywhere. "It rises high and" drowns the hills." It floods the universe. But all I see elsewhere is nothing compared with what is here. "HEREIN" IS LOVE." Love free, unbounded and unconquerable.

Brothers, is this one God our one God? Have we no idols? Is there nothing greater in our hearts than He, nothing that engrosses more of our sympathies, and engages more of our thoughts and powers? Let us look well to this, Away with all idols of the heart. Let Him be the all and in all of our souls. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.

A Fomiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the Acts of the Apostles, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt destrumt. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exceptical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archeological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

Subject: Paul's final Departure from Jerusalem, and his

Arrival in Casarea.

"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome," &c.—Acts xxiii. 11—35.

AUL had made several visits to Jerusalem since his conversion. To the last visit he looked with great interest, as he was the bearer of the charitable contributions of the Churches of Achaia and Macedonia to the poor saints at Jerusalem. For a long time his heart was on this visit: he struggled to perform it. The fear of death would not deter him from it; he made all circumstances bow to its accomplishment. But now he leaves that city never to return again he leaves it as a prisoner in chains. He had just delivered an able defence, first before the people, and afterwards before the Sanhedrim, and in each case, instead of conciliating them, he only intensified their unreasoning, unrighteous, and savage hostility; so much so, that the "chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and to bring him to the castle."

In glancing at the record here given of the circumstances connected with the termination of his connection with Jerusalem, and his journey to Cæsarea, there are, at least, three things worthy of our special attention:—A visit from

Christ—a conspiracy of enemies—an interposition of Providence.

I. A VISIT FROM CHRIST. "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

In what form "the Lord stood by him," whether as he appeared on earth, or as he appears in heaven, is not said; but he saw him not with his bodily eye, but with the eye of that soul that is endowed with faculties for perceiving the invisible. His advent to the apostle was—

First: Timely. We may well suppose that Paul's sensitive nature would be subject to many painful memories, gloomy thoughts, and boding anxieties, on that night, as he lay, with a lacerated body, a prisoner in the castle. Mayhaphe was permitted even to question the divinity of his cause, and the rectitude of his mission. The best men have often had sceptical thoughts, and such thoughts to such men are as the bleak winds of midnight to the unsheltered and unclad. The advent of Christ on this night was, therefore, most opportune. A verification, this, of a promise that never fails, "as thy day, so shall thy strength be." His advent now to the apostle was—

Secondly: Cheering. "Be of good cheer!" What a contrast to the words of falsehood, cursing, blasphemy, which during the previous days had been addressed to him! Who shall tell the cadence in which they were spoken—the soothing music, inspiring energy, the winning tenderness of Christ's voice, none know but those whose hearts have caught its accents. There are two things in Christ's words suited to cheer the heart of the apostle. (1) Commendation. "Thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem." Had Paul been allowed the mental agony of questioning whether he had done the right thing in Jerusalem? If so, here is a scattering of the dark thought; here is a Divine recognition, and an approving testimony of his services. "Thou hast testified of me"; thou

hast acquitted thyself nobly and faithfully, well done. Another thing in Christ's words suited to cheer Paul's heart. was (2) Information. "So thou must bear witness also at Rome." Paul had long been intensely anxious to visit Rome. "After I had been there" (Jerusalem), says he, "I must also see Rome." (Acts xix. 21.) In his epistles, too, his longings to visit Rome are strongly expressed. (Rom. i. 10; Rom. xv. 23, 24.) Rome, the mistress of the world, the home of poets, heroes, sages, artists, &c., how strongly he desired to be there, to preach Jesus, and the resurrection. Perhaps he had just been thinking that there was no probability of his ever visiting Rome. Perhaps he had given up this longcherished purpose, and had wept bitter tears of disappointment on the wreck of the loved hope. Christ's words assured him, however, that he should yet visit Rome. "For as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." This advent of Christ to Paul on this night, suggests three general truths :---

First: That great trials in duty are no evidence of unfaithfulness. Paul was faithful, yet he was in a dungeon.

Secondly: That trials in duty are contemplated by Christ. The trials of his people are not unforeseen casualties or misfortunes; they are according to his arrangement. He knows where the sufferer is, He approaches him, He speaks to him.

Thirdly: That trials in duty do not release us from the obligation to persevere. Paul was now told that he must bear witness also at Rome.

Another thing worthy of our special attention in this record of Paul's departure from Jerusalem for Cæsarea is—

II. A CONSPIRACY OF ENEMIES. "And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have

slain Paul. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain, that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him." Who these "certain of the Jews" were which now banded themselves together against Paul does not appear. Some suppose that they were of the "Sicarii," or "cutthroats," with which Judea then abounded. Desperadoes and banditti about this time overran the city, perpetrating deeds of plunder and blood. (Acts xxiii.) The conspiracy formed against Paul was—

First: Malignant. Their avowed object was to "kill" him. The sufferings to which he was already subject did not satisfy them. Like wild beasts they thirsted for his blood. The conspiracy was—

Secondly: Determined. "They bound themselves under a curse." In Greek, anathematized themselves; that is, pronounced themselves anathema or cursed of God unless they executed this vow. It means, Let God curse us if we eat or drink before we murder this man. Nothing could express a more invincible resolve. The conspiracy was—

'Thirdly: Strong. "More than forty" of these sanguinary desperadoes banded themselves together for this purpose. The escape of Paul from the murderous hands of such a combination seemed all but impossible. The conspiracy was—

Fourthly: Cunning. Paul was in the custody of the chief captain, the Roman officer, well guarded. How could they get him into their hands? Only through the Sanhedrim. Hence they applied to the chief priests and elders for the purpose. They inform these Jewish officers of their bloody intent, and they request them that they "signify to the chief captain, that he bring him down to them to-morrow," as though he would have heard something more concerning him. What they meant in their application to these Jewish authorities was this: "We are determined to kill Paul, but being in the charge of the Roman officer, we can get at him only

through your aid. The Roman officer will deliver him up to you on the plea that you want to make further judicial inquiries into his case. We ask you, therefore, to do this, and on his way from the castle to the council chamber, we will assassinate him." Whether the chief priests and elders agreed to this or not, one thing is certain, that the very fact that these wretches were emboldened to make such a request to them demonstrates the horrible injustice and immorality that prevailed amongst the rulers of the Jews.

Another thing worthy of our special attention in this record of Paul's departure from Jerusalem for Cæsarea is—

III. THE INTERPOSITION OF PROVIDENCE. In the verses that follow, 16—35, narrating the rescue of Paul, and his safe arrival in Cæsarea, we find Divine Providence doing the two great things which it is ever doing in this world—thwarting the evil and delivering the good.

First: We find Providence thwarting the evil. discovery and the defeat of this malignant plot is told with remarkable minuteness and inartistic simplicity in the following verses: "And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and Then Paul called one of the centurions unto told Paul. him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisonercalled me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me? And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee. that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them: for therelie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they

ready, looking for a promise from thee. So the chief eaptain, then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell, no man that thou has shewed these things to me."

In the method here recorded by which the purposes of evil men were thwarted, we find four things which generally characterise the procedure of Providence. (1) Simplicity, What was the agency employed? "Paul's sister's son." This is all we know of the family of Paul. Here is a young man, probably uninfluential and obscure who does the work. It has ever been Heaven's plan to employ apparently insignificant means for the accomplishment of great ends. (2) Unexpec-Little did the conspirators expect that their plan would be defeated by an obscure youth; little did Paul expect that deliverance would come for him from such a quarter, Yet so it is, means often most unlikely are employed to, accomplish important results. The waters of heavenly mercy. often come to men from rocky Horebs. (3) Naturalness. The whole is beautifully natural. It was natural for Paul's. nephew, having heard of the malignant plot, to seek access, to his uncle and to warn him of it. It was natural for his uncle to dispatch him to the chief captain to impart the intelligence to him. It was natural for the chief captain, as a man of justice and honour, to feel and act as he did. Thus, God acts, as a rule, in all his procedure with men. Here-

Secondly: We find Providence delivering the good. Here is a history of Paul's deliverance:—"And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night; and provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor. And he wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting. This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council;

whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell. Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: who, when they came to Cæsarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him. And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall." verses show-

First: That he secured a safe journey to Casarea. It was night when they started; the road was intricate and perilous—a distance of upwards of sixty miles, but he was well guarded. A detachment of four hundred and seventy brave and well-armed soldiers were appointed as an escort, to protect him against murderous plots, and all manner of violence. God's resources are greater than the devil's. There were forty murderers in quest of Paul's life, but God raised nearly five hundred brave soldiers to protect him. More are they that are for us than they that are against us. Truly, "the angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him," and delivers them. These verses show—

Secondly: That he secured a good introduction to the Roman judge. The letter that was written by Claudius Lysias to Felix, whilst complimenting the governor, expressed the unrighteous persecutions to which Paul had been subject, and the dangers to which he had been exposed, and by implication indicated his own belief as to the apostle's innocence as to the charges that were brought against him. The result of the letter on the mind of the governor was this:—

"I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come.

And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall." So far Paul is safe, and on his way to Rome, the Imperial city he long desired to visit. Truly, "many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all."

Pomiletic Aotes on the Epistle of James.

(No. VIII.)

Subject: A False and True Ritualism of Religion.

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—Jas. i. 26, 27.

ROBABLY we have no word adequately expressing $\theta \rho \hat{\eta} \sigma \kappa os$, here translated religious, or $\theta \rho \eta \sigma \kappa \epsilon a$, in the following verse translated "religion." It is a very rare word, and denotes outward services of God, rather than inward godliness. It is the expression, the external manifestation of religious life, rather than the life itself. The branches and fruit, not the root; the body, not the soul. It is essential and obligatory, but it is the ritual rather than the inward experiences of religion. We have, then, in these verses—

I. A FALSE RITUALISM. All external manifestation of religion is faulty, fantastic, and false, that is (a) self-deceptive, "seemeth to be religious," that is, that imagines he is religious; "deceiveth his own heart," such men are their own dupes. (β) Inconsistent. "Bridleth not his tongue." All garrulousness is here sternly condemned, whether it be that of uncharitableness, untruthfulness, or unreality. The unbridled tongue of the gossip, the censorious, the sentimentalist, the bigot, completely spoils the ritual of their religious life. (γ)

Valueless. He whose heart is thus deceived by himself, and whose habits are thus inconsistent, has but "a vain" ritual. It is not impressive, for it neither awes man nor honours God. It is not truthful, for it does not express piety. It does not represent, it misrepresents all that is best in man's nature.

II. A TRUE RITUALISM. Here we have a statement of what in the eye of our God and Father is religious service pure and unpolluted—the ritual that He accepts and demands. Mark, we are not here taught what is the inward piety God requires, the contrition, trust, love, that the Gospel brings. But rather the morality than the spirituality of true religion is here enjoined. As Coleridge well observes, "The outward service of ancient religion, the rites, ceremonies, and ceremonial restraints of the old law, had morality for their end. They were the letter of which morality was the spirit, the enigma of which morality was the meaning. But morality itself is the service and ceremonial (cultus exterior, θρησκεια) of the Christian religion." In the spirit of these words we are to insist that the religious ritual most acceptable to God is not any ceremony, however gorgeous, any rites, however appropriate in themselves, or however punctiliously observed; but (1) Beneficence. In answer to the question, how shall I best express my creed, symbolize my faith, I read, "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." The charities that lead me in the footprints of Emmanuel, who "went about doing good," are the best authorized rites of his religion. (2) Purity. He who keeps himself unspotted from the world is the only man who has undergone the true baptism, or partaken of the true eucharist. He whose soul is bathed in the teachings, influences, spirit of Jesus Christ, is the only man whom the apostle regarded as observing rightly the true ablutions.

Charity and holiness—not separable, but together, and not in themselves, but as the expression of piety—are thus the essential, the acceptable ritual of the Christian religion.

Bristol. U. R. Thomas.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: Realized desires often injurious to the Soul.

"And he gave them their request; but sent learness into their soul."—Psa. cvi. 15.

Analysis of Fomily the Seben Jundred and Sifty-Sourth.

THE inquiry, "what is good for a man in this life?" is L easily proposed, but is not so easily answered, because the answer must be determined by the social condition and material circumstances, by the mental capacity and physical state of those interested in the inquiry—that is to say, what is good for one man will be questionable, or, perhaps, injurious for another. For a hungry man, food would be an unqualified good, but for a glutton, who has taken more than nature : requires, whatever may be his propensity or desire, limitation, and perhaps abstinence, is the most beneficial. man, struggling with untold difficulties for mere existence. without any of its comforts or joys, labouring day by day to meet his obligations, and to keep the wolf from the door, money would be a blessing; it would not only confer material advantage, but receive social and even spiritual joy. the man who has enough of this world's good, and who idolizes his wealth, money would be an unmitigated curse. And yet for one who lives to do good, an increase of material prosperity would enlarge the sphere of his benevolent operations, intensify his desire to confer blessing upon his fellowmen, because it would deepen his sense of obligation to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. For the sincere Christian who prays, submitting his request to the Divine approval, the answer must be unqualified good; but for one who makes request, having vitiated tastes, questionable or depraved desires, who seeks the gratification of some appetite or lust, the thing desired, if granted by God, would be fraught with evil, and evil only. Now you are directed to our illustration of this in the text. During their journey in the wilderness, the people of Israel having an abundant supply of wholesome

and nutritious food, and having the prospect of being within a few months of possession of the promised land, lusted for flesh to eat, and grievously complained of the providence of God. This lustful desire of theirs was gratified, but with a terrible drawback; for while they feasted upon the flesh, yea, while it was yet in their teeth, the wrath of God came upon them; they were visited with a very great plague; multitudes of them died, and were buried in the grave of lust-or, as we have it in the text, "God gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul;" hence it would have been better. far for them if their desire had not been realized. The consequences here indicated of gratified lust, may be explained in two ways. The people, doubtless, were ravenous when they saw the quails; they ate their flesh with avidity, and to excess, the same lustful feeling influencing them now as before; and the result is a loathsome disease, the effect of their surfeit. But, further, God being displeased, thus visits them judicially with punishment, that makes their own gratification their bitterest experience.

But, leaving the historic connection, we proceed to the moral significance of this statement. Three things will here be evident :- First : Men, godly men, even the best of men, may and do sometimes desire that which is good in itself, but which is not really good for them to receive. The quails were good, good for food, and good for the Israelites under other circumstances, when it might have been pleasing to God to grant such supply, but they were not good nor desirable when lustfully craved. Thus is it with much that men desire now. And, to begin at the very lowest, what may be termed delicacies, though good in themselves, and, under certain conditions, desirable, when possessed are more of a curse than a blessing, because they favour and induce unenvious habits and tendencies, prejudicial to a right employment of time and abilities, to mental progress, and to personal spiritual religion. Plain and wholesome food is all we really need, and is best for body, mind, and spirit; hence our daily prayer should be, "Feed me with food convenient for me."

Again, I conceive, popularity, power, position, and wealth may be good in themselves, and in moderation may be good for us. And yet we may so enthusiastically desire them as to render their possession by us injurious. And thus, too, it may be with respect to friends or to children; we may so idolize them, and allow them to come between God and us, that their removal from us, rather than their continuance with us, may be the greatest good. But why is it that we sometimes desire what may be good in itself but which we are better without? Do we not mistake the relative value of what we desire, imagine that realizing it we shall possess all that we need for body and soul, and that our happiness will be complete and lasting, forgetting that God only can meet all the necessities of our complex nature, and that material things are unsatisfying and unsatisfactory at the best? Do we not, as did Israel of old, convert what is good in itself into evil by a covetous, lustful, unsanctified desire—a desire which unfits us to receive the good, and poisons the stream of every blessing? And is there not a forgetfulness of divine providence, of divine mercy and goodness in the past, and a reluctance to seek God's direction and pleasure, and to cast ourselves upon his bounty, wisdom, and faithfulness? We think we know what is best, that we are fully competent to choose any supposed good; hence we act without God, and do not submit our requests for his approval. We do not learn to say,-

"Not what I wish, but what I want,
O let thy grace supply;
The good, unasked, in mercy grant;
The ill, though asked, deny."

Secondly: God sometimes grants our requests even when they are not in accordance with his will, nor for our good. He permits us to realize the things desired, allows us to climb the heights upon which we had fixed our gaze. He gives us our own way, but our success is no indication of his approved, or of our wisdom, nor is it a guarantee of present happiness or future well-being. Hence, we observe—Thirdly: That what-

ever we realize, however good it may be in itself, in answer to desires which have not been submitted to the divine will, is questionable if not injurious. Or, in other words, the influence and tendency of unsanctified blessings when secured is detrimental to a course of piety, and to the life of godliness in the soul. For when it is said in the text that Godsent learness into the souls of the Israelites, it may mean that the very realization of their desires induced such a sad calamity. Here there is a law, the working of which we should observe and understand, that we may be delivered from the evil indicated in the text.

I. THE OPERATION OF THIS LAW. By it the life of religion in the soul is deteriorated and weakened, the spiritual desires and appetites are lessened, interest in everything pertaining to godliness is diverted, and the world, material things, and sometimes sin, engage the heart and the life, and alienate the soul's best affections from God. These are the results, the operation may soon be discovered. First: The spirit which prompts a desire which we are unwilling to submit to God's wisdom and disposal, must be prejudicial to religion, whether it is entertained by an ungodly person, by one seeking to know the truth, or by one who has long known the way of righteousness, because the manifestation of such desire is expressed opposition to God, and must alienate the heart, more or less, from Him. When a child says to his parent "I will have that," without submitting his desires to the parent's will and wisdom, then commences a rupture which may continue to increase and which may never be healed. The law of the text thus operates. Secondly: The efforts made by us to realize what we desire, but ought not to receive at the time and in the way we wish, are generally unfavourable to religion, if they do not undermine and dissipate it.

A child desires some supposed good which the parent, in his wisdom, is not disposed to grant, that child resorts to artifice and cunning, or strenuously employs lawful or unlawful means to realize the object of desire. Now, the

determination and the process have injured that child's young nature beyond expression, and perhaps beyond reparation. Now, it is thus men act when they are not willing to submit their desires to God. They labour with determined assiduity to fulfil their own wishes, and this to the neglect of spiritual duties. A man desires the gratification of some appetite, or the realization of some hope, or the possession of some good, and for it toils night and day, neglects communion with God and with himself, slights religious duties and spiritual work. And if this be true you can easily see how leanness will soon come into the soul. Thirdly: That which is desired, when realized, being realized under such circumstances, must be injurious rather than helpful to a life of religion, because you have a wish fulfilled in opposition to God's will-a good received which is not good for you, and this which you desired, and now possess, comes between your soul and God. between your spiritual need and your greatest good. No wonder then that you lose interest in religion, tire of the ways of piety, and that your zeal and love and devotion decline, your joys diminish, and your hopes become darkened.

II. THE GENERAL APPLICATION OF THIS LAW. And here comes before us the appalling fact that the law is universal, unvarying and potent; and we can escape it only by submitting our desires and requests to God, and by acquiescing in all his arrangements. First: This law applies to individuals, whatever be the positions they occupy, or the circumstances by which they are surrounded. It needs no argument to show that this law applies to those who, like Israel, histfully desire what they ought not to receive, who desire it for its own sake, and not for the uses it may supply; men who live simply to eat and drink, and to dress in the height of fashion, to gratify all their appetites and passions, and to enjoy themselves to the full, must come under the force of this law. And all good desires, devout feelings, and spiritual convictions produced when under gracious influences, must inevitably be dissipated, leanness must come into the

This is true, also, in reference to the unreflecting, to soul those who, desiring a possible good-an increase of salary. or an improved worldly position—thoughtlessly endanger, if they do not forfeit, spiritual privileges, religious associations, and advantages. The law likewise applies to those who haste to be rich, or popular, or powerful, more to gratify their own unsanctified ambition than the better to serve their generation, and the more worthily to glorify God. But this law operates not only in individuals, but in communities, in nations. Let a people thirst for glory, for distinction, for conquest, let them desire to be in advance of all other nations, and all this without consulting God's will or seeking Such a nation may realize their desires, but it is more than probable that the manners and lives of the people will be corrupted, and that religious life will sink to a low ebb or pass away altogether. And this law is true in respect to churches. Let a people desire a grand and an imposing structure for its own sake, to gratify their vanity and pride, and to place them in advance of the churches in the locality, their ambition may be gratified, but it is more than probable that their religious life will wane, and it will be a great mercy if they have not to say in reference to their religion, "The glory has departed." And thus will it be when wealth is desired rather than piety, men of position rather than men of God, and greatness and popularity rather than goodness, and carnest, quiet working.

III. THE TEACHING OF THIS LAW. There are many lessons we may learn from it. (1) There is much in this world good in itself that we can well do without. (2) Every supposed good does not, when realized, answer all our expectations. "All is not gold that glitters." Lot knew something of this by a prolonged sojourn in Sodom. (3) It is better to be without the seeming good and retain our piety and interest in religion than to realize that good and lose the freshness and vigour of spiritual things, and endanger our everlasting well-being. (4) We should learn to submit all

our desires to God. (5) Let us remember that with an increase of material good we require a corresponding measure of divine grace. (6) In how many the text has been or will be even everlastingly fulfilled. May our desires be controlled and sanctified by our Father in heaven, and we be ever able to say, "Not my will, but thine be done." Amen.

Bristol.

JOHN JAMES.

Subject: The Old and New Garment, and the Old and New Wine.

"And he spake also a parable unto them: No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better."—Lake v. 86—39.

Junlysis af Fomily the Seben Pundred und Filty-Fifth.

HIS text I have already looked at as furnishing a striking illustration of the popular religious evil of the day.*

Let us now regard the text in its general and practical application to our own individual character and experience.

Man, through sin, has lost a "garment," and, through grace, he has gained one of a better sort. He has lost the righteousness of innocence, and found the "righteousness of God." This righteousness was symbolised by the "coats of skins" which "the Lord God made" to cover man's nakedness—the character of the clothing, and the mode of its preparation, declaring, in figure, the superhuman nature of the righteousness which Divine love and wisdom have devised for a fallen world.

Referring to the pamphlet just published by the author, entitled
 Ritualism exposed by Old Clothes and Old Bottles." London: F
 Pitman.

The attempt to provide a human righteousness is the repetition of Adam's foolishness in trusting to his clothing of "fig leaves." In spiritual questions, as well as questions of secularities, man's nature is snail-like—he will cling tenaciously to his shell: to disimprison, you must break the shell. Man will severely afflict himself—will weep, do penance, give alms, toil like a slave, to save self; but self must do the work, or have some credit in its accomplishment. Naaman was prepared to save no expense, or time, or trouble in order to find a remedy for his malady that accorded with his own ideas.

I. THE OLD AND NEW GARMENT. The absence of righteousness in man is, directly or indirectly, alluded to in Scripture in the figure of a "garment." The "leprosy" in the garment—the "filthy rags" with which the prophet Isaiah compares the righteousness of backsliding Israel—the vision of Joshua, in which he was seen "clothed in filthy garments"—all refer to it, as does also the ragged dress of the Prodigal. The apostle Jude exhorts us to "hate the garment spotted by the flesh;" and the apostle Paul admonishes us to "put off the old man," and to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Human righteousness, then, is compared to a garment which has been torn and stained by sin—which cannot be repaired nor cleansed so as to satisfy the pure and perfect eye of God. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. xiii. 23.) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." (John iii. 6.) The life of the "flesh" cannot, therefore, produce the life of the "spirit," nor the "carnal mind," which is "enmity against God," the "spiritual mind," which is life and peace." Nevertheless, God must have the spiritual to satisfy Him, "for they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii.)

Hence the gracious provision made in Christ. He is the soul's "new creation"—the true "wedding garment"—

"wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."
"My righteousness is in heaven," said Bunyan, on discovering that Christ was his "Life." In sympathy with Bunyan, every soul that has consciously found Christ, can likewise sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness," &c. (Isa. lxi. 10.)

The attempt to seek justification in anything connected with the human, in anything outside of Christ, is self-righteousness. Many who would be greatly astonished at being charged with the sin of self-righteousness, are, nevertheless, guilty of it. In the most unlikely persons, to outward sight, and in things least suspected, the evil may be traced. There are Christians who have been for years making their religious history a mournful dirge instead of a song of gladness, ever repeating the sad lament:—

"'Tis a point I long to know, Oft it causes anxious thought," &c.

The reason of this is, that self, in some way or other, is mixed up with the soul's ground of peace. The eye is looking at the "rents" in the "old garment," at the flaws in the "old bottle," and failing to find an argument, in favour of the possession of spiritual life, in the fact that were it not for the strength of the "new" the "old" would not be "rent," nor the old vessel broken but for the energy of the "new wine." Soul-peace and joy will never be found as a permanent possession till Christ fully supplants self-in the complete renunciation of all "confidence in the flesh," knowing that "the new agreeth not with the old," and that however much the "old garment" may be patched, and mended, and improved by outward acts of morality, or inward control, it can by no means be ever made presentable to the eye of infinite purity, that can look only on that which is " without spot, and blameless;" and that although by these means we may, so to speak, stick together the broken earthenware, and

varnish, paint, and gild it, which, to outside observers shall be hardly distinguishable from that which is pure, and of finest material; it will, notwithstanding, never be made fit fer "the king's table."

There being no "agreement" between the "old" and the "new," "rents" and breakages follow. This is particularly the case with those who have not received Christ, whose religion is mere morality. With all such, the evil propensities are stronger than the good. Human goodness is less strong than satanic evil. "The strength of sin is the law." The law forbids, but sin craves; and the natural taste is for the evil, for the "old wine."

We are thus furnished with an explanation of the short-lived piety of those who "endure but for a season," and then "fall away." Theirs is a human religion—mere reformation and improvement of outward character. A new piece is put on to the old garment, new wine put into old bottles, but "the strength of sin" is soon made manifest; the power of some strong temptation assails, and there is "rending" and "breaking." The man's religion is built on a human foundation. He is labouring after good fruit of its kind, but he is sticking it on to a bad tree; consequently, the first strong wind of temptation blows it off. The house is beautiful to superficial observers, but it is built on sand, and is therefore insecure. A religion not based on Christ must come to nought.

II. THE OLD AND NEW WINE. The second parable corrects the prevailing error among Christians, already referred to. Whenever they become conscious of having offended God by some sin of omission, or commission, they lose their peace. And why? Because their peace was based on self, not on Christ. They have soiled and torn their garments, and are ashamed; and so they ought to be, but their garment is not Christ's—that remains intact; it cannot be defiled; it is a righteousness that cannot sin. (1 John iii. 9.) The wine of the Spirit does not flow through their impure and leaky

vessels, but through Christ; it is not lost, therefore, atthough its influence on them has been for a while exhaled amidst a worldly atmosphere. Thus more fully are the words of the parable illustrated—" both are preserved"—the vessel and the "wine"—Christ and the Spirit.

We learn, moreover, that as Christ Jesus is the divinely chosen vessel for the communications of the Spirit, the measure of our abiding in Him will be the measure of our being filled with the Spirit; while the measure of our being partakers of the Spirit will determine our spiritual power. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh."

This is the only power that can enable us to "keep our garments unspotted by the world," so walking as to reveal as little as possible of our "nakedness and shame." (Rev. iii. 18.) To this end we must do practically what God has done judicially—discorn the "old garment," and bring the old vessel into disuse, saying, whensoever temptation meets us, "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?" (Canticles v. 3.) Then concerning our life others will be constrained to acknowledge, "These men are full of new wine!" Thus our joy and practical holiness, our peace within and power without, will "both be preserved."

Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. V.)

Subject: Geology no part of Theology.

Geology belongs to reconcile Geology with the Bible. Geology belongs to one age, the Bible to another. Geology deals with one era, one class, one system of facts, and the Bible with a totally different and distinct class. This is the key-note of our theory, for which we claim only the credit of common sense, without insisting on the novelty or

originality of our views, though we hope to put them more strongly and more plainly than we believe them to have been

put before.

As well might we attempt to "reconcile" the histories of Greece or Rome with the history of the late disastrous war in America, or the disclosures of astronomy with the topography of modern London, as to reconcile the repeated destructions and renovations of our earth before man was placed upon it—the investigation of which forms the proper business of geology—with the subsequent history of that earth and its inhabitants. Geology was, in fact, dead and buried ages before the Fall of man necessitated that very Revelation, the opening chapters of which so many of our timid commentators and apologists insist on regarding as a retrospective review of this bygone period in the history of the universe.

The Bible is not to be warped to any such purpose. has revealed Himself to us in more ways than one. He has given us the majestic volume of Creation, the visible world; He has given us his Word, and He has given us the direct witnessings of his Spirit. A large portion of the first of these volumes, though still pregnant with instruction, has come down to us in so mutilated a form—its earlier leaves, as has been well remarked, having been scorched with fire, some of its characters obliterated, and others so materially damaged that we might perhaps, but for the beautiful lessons it teaches, feel justified in regarding it as laid aside from further service. We might indeed argue à priori that the Bible would not carry us back to the period embraced by geology and palæontology, but maintain, as we think it does, a sublime silence upon the subject. After informing us that "in the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth"—a truth so vitally practical that it could not have been dispensed with—the inspired writer comes at once to the origin and history of the present constitution of things, taking up the marvellous story of creation just where geology had dropped it.

Without insisting unduly on the critical meaning of the first verse of Genesis, translated by Parkhurst, long before geology became a science, "the very heavens and the very earth," or paraphrastically, "the substance of the heavens, and the substance of the earth," it must strike every unsophisticated reader that after this opening paragraph, nothing whatever is said of an absolute creation—of the making of something out of nothing. The earth "was," the

darkness "was," the deep "was," the waters were "divided." and gathered together, and the dry land was called upon to appear—to "stand," as St. Peter says "out of the water and in the water." In all this there is nothing more than collocation and arrangement—no act of creative energy—the sacred writer reposing on the great fact already stated, that in the Beginning—whenever that was—all things were made by God, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

When we look at the scope and purpose of the Bible, is there any reason for supposing that the Holy Spirit would introduce the question of geology at all? Considering how very much the Bible has left unsaid, relative to the history and destinies of humanity, the rise and fall of empires, and the thousand collateral questions that come so very much nearer to us, why should we suppose that it would travel back to pre-Adamite times, and discuss events which took place "before the mountains were settled; before the hills!"

To us this appears to be so natural and easy a solution of all the difficulties which beset the vexed question of the mineral and Mosaic cosmogonies, that we are surprised to find any writers of talent engaging in so fruitless a controversy. The inveterate pugnacity of "science fulsely so called," is notorious. It deals in "oppositions," and refuses every path that is not bristling with difficulties. Too often, indeed, in true science, the direct and simple is neglected for the abstruse and roundabout—so little store seems to be set on opinions that cost little. But not unfrequently it is much better to cut the Gordian knot at once, than to waste time and talent in unravelling it. This seems to be pre-eminently the case here, for notwithstanding all that has been done to reconcile geologists and the Bible, the case is as far as ever from any satisfactory adjustment.

Let us then look the facts of geology fairly in the face, and instead of attempting to shape them to our impressions derived from the Bible, see rather if we cannot take them altogether out of the range of Revelation and interleave the whole of their immense ages and multitudinous disclosures between the first and second verses of the inspired record.

Our earth has evidently been cradled in fire. Its earliest rocks have been, beyond all reasonable question, crystallized by intense heat, and even at the present day its internal regions retain a temperature so much greater than that which prevails upon the surface, that many of our hot baths in Europe, and elsewhere, are heated from this source alone. On these fire-formed rocks repose a series of strata deposited in water, but at a time when the central heat was still so great as to bake them into intense hardness, and destroy all organized forms of life. Proceeding still upwards, we find strata, like those below, which have been evidently thrown up, disturbed, and dislocated, but containing animal and vegetable remains, seriously damaged as to form, but sufficiently perfect to be arranged by the skilled palæontologist. Mountains have been literally, and many times, overturned by the roots through the antagonistic or combined forces of fire and water, and everything indicates that the entire globe, as now constituted, is built up of the ruins of former worlds, tenanted in succession by different classes of existence.

Above this debris of rock, earth, shells, sand, clay, gravel, and rolled pebbles, lie the superficial strata—the alluvial and diluvial deposits, bearing evident traces of subsidence from a watery chaos, such as is brought before us by Moses. What is, therefore, popularly regarded as the "creation" of the world. must date from the era of these later deposits, none of the previous conditions of the earth indicating, in any way, its emergence from the great, dark, deep of the inspired writer, whilst this, its most recent phasis, is in exact accordance with such an idea. Our argument, therefore, stands briefly thus—our earth was originally an intensely heated mass of matter. When God determined to place man upon it, it had cooled down, and lay swaddled in the waters of a pristine The Bible tells us nothing of what happened during the long interval, between these ages of fire and water; but geology does. It has interleaved its wonderful story between these pristine fire-rocks and the post-tertiary shouls of the Mosaic chaos. Fish, reptiles, zoophytes, land animals, and birds, all strangely different from any that now exist, vegetated in its seas, darted through their wide waters, crawled or wallowed in its murky morasses, shot through its heavy and unwholesome atmosphere, thick with exhalations from its huge reeds, ferns, and twilight forests; and life and death, destruction and renovation, characterized, as now, its many and protracted cycles. But the same God who gives its lustre to an insect's wing, watched over it, and has written on the forms and adaptations of his minutest creations—the beetle. the dragon-fly, the eye of the trilobite, or the frond of a fern.

such beautiful proofs of a Father's love and care, that the undevout geologist must be still more mad than the scaptical astronomer.

In whatever way we set about reconciling the Mosaic cosmogony with the facts of Geology, the difficulties seem insurmountable. If we accept the "days" of creation as periods of uncertain and protracted duration, we are only darkening counsel, for the geological sequence of existences on our earth, is altogether at variance with the order observed in the Bible. Poor Hugh Miller, who ought to have known better, tried very hard to give the fossil grasses, herbs and trees priority in point of time over the living creatures of the waters, though every tyro in geology must know that the earliest organized remains are those of fish, zoophytes, and crustaceans, and that all the curious ichthyology of his own peculiar old red sandstone, lived and died ages before the beautiful vegation of the carboniferous system had any existence. But the difficulty would be but half surmounted, could it be shown that the geological order of events was exactly coincident with the work of the seven days of creation. Supposing that as these days—each many thousands, or possibly millions of years in duration-rose in succession upon the earth, God had peopled it with the various existences brought to light by geology, when did He so utterly destroy them that no living specimens have come down to our own day? For, if any fact may be received as proved, it is surely this-that very few indeed of these creatures are exactly similar to their living congeners, whilst the majority are so vastly unlike, that no comparison whatever can be instituted between them. It seems, therefore, utterly preposterous to suppose that the sacred writer would introduce into his narrative a compendium of extinct palæontology, er give an account of worlds long dead, buried, and extinguished, Does it not strike any reflective mind as a thing utterly irreconcilable with the Divine wisdom, to employ the pen of inspiration in recording the history of a creation, five-sixths of which had been entirely and irretrievably obliterated. and of challenging for it our admiration and study, by the assertion, "and God saw that it was good," if so large a proportion of its marvels were never, or only in broken and most imperfect parentheses, to be cognizable by the human intellect?

Yet we see no alternative but this, if we admit the six

days of creation, as they are popularly called, to have embraced the entire period recorded by the discoveries of geology. Little do the advocates of hereditary and educational prejudices, and the old-fashioned interpretations of Holy Writ, think that they are actually proving its falsity. and showing that God's expressed purpose with regard to the preservation and perpetuation of his inferior creatures had been entirely frustrated. According to the creed of our babyhood, all the extinct races of animals rank under the general description of "antediluvian." If we pester our grandmothers with curious questions about the enormous dizards, the gigantic toads, the winged fishes, the flying dragons, the "gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire," the muscular megatheria and dinotheria of past ages, they have but one answer—they lived before Noah's flood: they were all destroyed at the Deluge. But how few reflect on the startling insidelity of the reply, which really originates in the fond and foolish notion that the sacred narrative needs to be thus bolstered and buttressed up against those contemptible assailants, who think there is such a thing as "confirmation stronger than Holy Writ."

An unbiassed perusal of the narrative of the Flood must satisfy any intelligent mind that the animals before the Flood were exactly similar to those after the Flood, and not in the least like the strange and composite forms that peopled our earth during the geological era. Noah was directed to take of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort, into the ark, "to keep them alive"-"to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." Yet the fearful commentator, shutting his eyes to the plainest facts, foists upon us whole races of extinct creatures, utterly unlike any that are now living, as the types and representative-progenitors of those so tenderly cared for by Noah! But he makes no attempt whatever to clear up the mystery of their entire extinction, in the very face of the divine fiat that they were to be kept alive, or to show how it happens that they have utterly failed to increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, when God in his infinite wisdom had decreed that they should do so!

Of all infidelities, may we be kept from the overweening anxiety of Uzzah! Better that the ark of truth be shaken, than stayed up by the coward hands of imbecility.

Biblical Criticism.

By Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, -EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chapter xxiii. 1.—And Paul, steadfastly looking at the council, said, Men [avoos], brethren, I [emphatic] in all good conscience have conducted myself before God until this day, 2. But the high priest Ananias ordered them that stood by 3. Then Paul said to him, God him to strike his mouth. shall strike thee, O whitewashed wall: What, dost thou [ov] sit judging me according to the law, and transgressing law commandest me to be struck? 4. And they that stood by said, Railest thou at the high priest of God? 5. And Paul said, I knew not, brethren, that it was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the chief of thy people. 6. But Paul, knowing that the one part were of the Sadducees, and the other of the Pharisees, cried in the council, Men [avôpes], brethren, I [emphatic] am a Pharisee a son of Pharisees: concerning hope and resurrection of the dead I [emphatic] am judged. 7. And when he had said this, there arose a discord of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the multitude was divided. 8. For while Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, Pharisees confess the both. 9. And there arose a great cry: and Scribes of the part of the Pharisees, rising up, strove greatly, saying, No evil find we in this man; what if a spirit or an angel spoke to him? 10. And great discord arising, the præfect. fearing lest Paul would be torn asunder by them, commanded the soldiery to go down and snatch him from the midst of them, and bring [him] into the fort. 11. And in the following night, the Lord standing by him, said, Be of good cheer; for as thou fully barest witness of the things concerning me at Jerusalem, so thou must bear witness at Rome also. 12. And when the day was come, the Jews having made a covenant, cursed themselves, saying they would neither eat nor drink

until that they had killed Paul. 13. And there were more than forty who had made this conjuration. 14. Who coming to the chief priests and the elders, said, With a curse we cursed ourselves, to taste nothing until we kill Paul. 15. Now therefore do ye [emphatic] with the council, show to the præfect that he bring him down to you, as if ye were going to examine more exactly the things concerning him: and we [emphatic] before he has come near, are ready to slay him. 16. And the son of Paul's sister having heard of the lying in wait, approaching and coming into the fort, he announced [it] to Paul. 17. And Paul having called to [him] one of the centurions, said, Bring this youth to the prafect, for he has something to announce to him. 18. He then taking him with [him] brought [him] to the præfect, and says, The prisoner Paul having called me to [him] asked [me] to bring this young man to thee, having something to speak to thee. 19. And the præfect taking hold of his hand, and withdrawing by themselves inquired. What is it that thou hast to announce to me? 20. And he said, The Jews agreed together to ask thee, that to-morrow thou wouldest bring Paul down to the council, as if thou wert going to inquire something more exactly concern ing him. 21. Thou [emphatic] then be not persuaded by them; for there lie in wait for him of them men [avdoes] more than forty, who cursed themselves neither to eat nor drink until they slay him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from thee. 22. The prefect then dismissed the young man, having charged him to speak out to no one, that thou showedst these things to me. 23. And having called to [him] certain two of the centurions he said, Make ready two hundred soldiers, that they may go as far as Cæsarea, and horsemen seventy, and lancers two hundred, from the third hour of the night. 24. And furnish beasts, that having set Paul on, they may bring him safe to Felix the governor: * 25. Having written an epistle containing this form: 26. Claudius Lysias

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^{*} Some manuscripts interpolate the following between verses 24 and 25:—For he feared lest the Jews should snatch and kill him, and he himself be slandered, as about to receive a bribe.

to the most excellent governor Felix, greeting: 27. This man [arooa] having been seized by the Jews, and about to be slain by them, coming on with the soldiery I took away, having learnt that he was a Roman. 28. And wishing to know fully the reason for which they accused him, I brought him down to their council: 29. Whom I found accused concerning questions of their law, but having no accusation worthy of death or of bonds: 30. But a plot having been disclosed to me as in course against the man [arôpa], at once I sent [him] to thee, having commanded also to the accusers that they should speak before thee. 31. Then the soldiers, according to what had been ordered them, having taken up Paul, brought him by night to Antipatris. 32. And on the morrow, having left the horsemen to go with him, they returned into the fort: 33. Who having come into Cæsarea, and given up the epistle to the governor, presented also Paul to him. 34. And having read, and asked of [him] of what præfecture he was, and found that [it was] from Cilicia, 35. I will hear thee fully, said he, when also thy accusers are come; commanding [him] to be kept in the palace of Herod.

Misapplied Texts.

By the Rev. THOS. SCOTT, M.A., Rector of Wappenham, Towcester.

(No. II.)

1 Cor. vii. 32, xv. 50; Jas. iii. 17.

E are about to remark upon two or three instances, which have lately come under our notice, of erroneous use of passages of Scripture—instances certainly not very important, and assuredly very easy to correct. One of them amused us a good deal from its obviousness of error. It occurred in conversation, and the object of the speaker was to guard young ministers of small income against over scrupulosity as to marriage without due provision for the expenses likely to ensue. Be not too particular, it was urged. Trust

in Providence; take the steps which seem needful to your comfort. Did not St. Paul himself say, "I would have you without carefulness."

We need scarcely say, that this is exactly opposite to the teaching of the apostle. The passage referred to is 1 Cor. vii. 32. Θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμνους εἶναι. His meaning is not, "I would have you without carefulness," at least in the modern sense of that word, which now seems to mean prudence, heed, looking forward to the future—but "I would have you without care"—without anxiety, without worldly distraction. And in order to produce freedom from care, he, in fact, enjoins the presence of carefulness, and particularly presses upon them, especially during the present trouble, to avoid that frequent source of wretched anxiety, a hasty mar-

riage—in fact, perhaps marriage altogether.

Another instance of careless quotation occurred in a sermon we lately heard, and from a good man, and not a bad preacher. He was preaching, with much force on our need of spiritual renewal-on the thorough change of character required before we could be pleasing to a holy God, and, still more, before we could be fitted for his heavenly kingdom. And then came his error. He brought in to prove his point, and with a good deal of energy, both of word and manner. like a lawyer introducing a witness of much importance to his cause, the following text: (1 Cor. xv. 50)—"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Nothing could be more true or more important than the proposition which he maintained; yet it was likely to lose credit rather than to gain it through the irrelevance of his proof. We here do not need verbal criticism. The thing is determined by the context. The meaning evidently is, that the present organism of the body, suited though it be to the purposes of our earthly life, is entirely inconsistent with, entirely unfit for the requirements of the future heavenly life. It might possibly be argued that in the preceding verse it had been said, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" and that this was spoken of the moral nature of the first Adam, and of the second. A careful examination, however, of the apostle's argument would show that he was not speaking of moral resemblance, but of bodily organism: We would not, of course, deny the connection between the present regeneration of the soul, and the ultimate regeneration of the body. We would simply adopt the beautiful paraphrase of Jerome, quoted by Wordsworth:—"Tandiu regnum Dei non possidebunt quamdiu caro tantum sanguisque permanserint. Quam antem corruptionem induerit incorruptionem, quæ prius gravi pondere premebatur in terram, acceptis Spiritûs pennis et immutationis non abolitionis novâ glorià volabit ad cœlum."*

The third case of error, or of approach to error which we shall notice, is, perhaps, not so usually met with now as it was twenty years ago. It was then not uncommon to take James iii. 17, and to interpret it as if it meant that the "wisdom from above" could not be "peaceable" while all around it was "pure"—that the first business of true wisdom was to ascertain that the doctrine of those with whom we might be conversant was right, and then, and not till then, that it would lead us to peaceable communion with them. Now, how far this opinion is in itself true, or how far it will need modification before it be accepted, we will not pretend to say; but will only assert, what few now a-days will be disposed to deny, that it is not here stated by St. James. What he says of the wisdom from above, is this: -πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή έστιν, ἐπειτα εἰρηνική. St. James had been speaking of the pretended wisdom of some whom he had been censuring, and had pronounced it "earthly, sensual, devilish." He had added, "where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." With this he contrasts the true wisdom from above; the false wisdom is sensual (ψυχική); this is: puris (ἀγνή); the Alse wisdom is jealous, envious, contentious; this is peaceable (εἰρηνική), subtle, and easy to be entreated; the word pure (ἀγνή) does not mean correct in doctrine, free from error (though this, certainly, might be said of heavenly wisdom), but free from sensuality, opposed to every defilement, μηδενας των σαρκικών αντεχομένη (clinging to nought of the carnal). We would not deny the moral truth of this application often formerly made of this text (though we think it was often so urged as to foster an over controversial spirit); we would merely say that the text itself holds out no warrant for it.

^{*} They will occupy the kingdom of God as long as they continue merely flesh and blood; but when corruption has put on incorruption, the soul, which formerly was weighed down to earth, on receiving the wings of the Spirit, and the new glory of a complete change yet not of extinction, will soar aloft to heaven.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

A WORD TO THE GOD-CRITICISING MAN.

"Should it be according to thy mind?"—Job. xxxiv. 33.

This appeal occurs in one of the magnificent addresses of Elihu to Job. Although the speaker, like the "three friends," misunderstand the partriarch's character. reason from wrong principles, many of his sentiments are divinely true, and stated with remarkable clearness, vigour, and subli-I accept the popular idea attached to the textnamely, that it is not to be expected that God will conault the views of his creatures as to his own procedure. regard Elihu as virtually saying to Job, "Is it to be supposed that God will manage his government according to thy mind?" The appeal indicates a tendency in human nature that is irrational, immoral, and prevalent. text is an appeal to those, and they are many, who are dissatisfied with the procedure of Heaven, and dare to sit in judgment upon the Most High. To such we put two questions:-

I. SHOULD THE ARRANGE-MENTS OF LIFE BE ACCORDING TO THY MIND? Those who

constantly murmuring under the dispensations of Providence, and who think and say that things should be otherwise, should remember four things:—(1.) The circumscribed sphere of their observation. What a small spot of this earth, which is itself but a mere atom in the creation, thou, who wouldst have things according to thy mind, occupiest; whereas God's Government comprehends the universe. (2.) The limitation of human faculties. How little, even in thy small sphere, hast thou the power of seeing. Thou canst not penetrate the essence of anything about thee, nor canst thou understand all the relations, bearings, issues, of what thou seest in that little spot of thine. (3.) The brevity of man's mortal existence. system of things under which thou livest began in eternity, and reaches through interminable ages. Thou art only here for a few short years. . Thou "art of yesterday, and knowest nothing." (4.) The narrowness of human sympathies. You only feel an interest in the few things about you. Your sympathies are bounded to your little sphere of observation, but

the system of things under which you live is founded upon a sympathy with the universe. What is your point of observation to his? What is a mole-hill to the Andes? What is your faculty of knowing to his? What is the glowworm, that reveals the tiny leaf on which it rests, to the central sun that makes manifest the creation? What is your time for understanding things compared with his ! Even a thousand years to eternity are less than one atom to all the massive globes of space. What is your sympathy to his? He loves all. His love is the spring, the support, and the sunshine of all existences? Should life. then, be arranged according to thy mind? The idea is as monstrous as it is wicked.

II. SHOULD THE METHOD OF REDEMPTION BE ACCORDING TO THY MIND? There are many who raise objections to Christianity. Many who imagine that they could have constructed a better system of Spiritual redemption. Two facts convince us that the human mind is utterly incompetent to form a scheme for Spiritual restoration.

First: The mistakes it has made on the subject in interpreting nature. Men under the light of nature tried for four thousand long years to find out a true system of religious redemption, and failed—signally failed. "The world by wisdom knew not God." And now everywhere where Christianity is not, it is still trying, and all its efforts are fruitless. "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people."

Secondly: The mistakes it has made on the subject in interpreting Christianity, With the Gospel under its eve clearly revealing the scheme, it has formed most gross and absurd conceptions as to the way of salvation. The perverters of the Gospel plan of salvation may be divided into two grand classes. (1.) Those that infer from Christianity that they can be saved by a mere intellectual fuith in certain theological propositions. (2.) These that infer that they can be saved by an external observance of certain ceremonies—the intervention of priests, the invocation of saints, the observance of sacraments, &c.

Thus, we say to the captions sceptic, we cannot have a system of religion according to thy mind. Thy mind is utterly unsuited to construct a religion redemptive to main and acceptable to God. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard." &c.

TRUÉ SAINTHOOD.

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."—Rom. viii. 17.

I. TRUE SAINTHOOD HAS A SPECIAL FILIAL RELATION TO All genuine saints are "children of God" in a special sense. There is, indeed, a general sense in which all men are his children; they are his offspring, and, as spirits, they have a resemblance to him. But true Christians are his children in a special sense. Wherein is the difference? Simply, here they have the true spirit of the relationship —the filial love. Mankind in general have not this. The amconverted millions are his offspring but they have lost all filial affection and regard. Hence, they practically ignore the existence of their Father. and pursue a course of conduct opposed to his wishes and commands. Genuine have this true Christians filial spirit—the spirit of adoption; hence, they are in a special sense his children. Now, the giving of men this spirit of children is the great work of the Gospel—a work that is variously represented as conversion, regeneration, redemption, adoption, creation. &c.

II. TRUE SAINTHOOD IS IN-VESTED WITH THE HIGHEST PRIVILEGES. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and

joint heirs with Christ." Infinite is the difference, in condition, between those who have the true spirit of children and those who have it not. The latter are without hope, and without God in the world; the former are "heirs" to a magnificent inheritance.

First: They are "heirs of God." An heir is one who is entitled to an inheritance either by the will of another. or by birth. Christians are heirs of God by the birth within them of this filial spirit. Heirs of God! What a universe of blessedness is involved in this position. On earth there are poor heirs expectants of a very slender But Christians patrimony. are heirs to an "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled," &c.

Secondly: Joint heirs with This expression is Christ. used, no doubt, by the apostle, to convey a higher idea of the privileges of the good. Angels are true children of God, and they are heirs of God, but they are not "joint heirs with Christ." They are not to expect what Christ has as a son -thrones, crowns, empires won by suffering, toil, and Christians have to battle. "enter into the joy of their Lord," and sit down on the throne with Him.

CONCLUSION. First: Learn the infinite mercy of God. That love which steeps to

make rebellious men his true children, and invest them with a sublime heirship, passeth knowledge. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope," &c.

Secondly: Learn our obligations to live a dignified life. Men on earth who are heirs to an illustrious title and a magnificent patrimony, are trained to conduct themselves with a noble bearing. In a far higher sense ought Christians to be dignified in their spirit, their manners, and pursuits.

Thirdly: Learn our encouragement to fortifude under all the trials that afflict us. What awaits us? "Our light afflictions, that are but for a moment," &c.

THE LIFE OF THE TRUE.

- "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job. i. 21.

Job was undoubtedly a true man. He is described in the first verse as "a perfect and upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil." His history, therefore, may fairly be regarded as a type of the history of all true men, and

that utterance of his, in the text, suggests three general truths, that mark the history of true men.

I. THE LIFE OF THE TRUE HAS THE ORDINARY VICISSE-Job had received children, cattle, and property from the Lord, and all had been now "taken away." the life of all men there is constant receiving Health, pleasure, losing. friendship, fame, property, these come and go. have them to-day, and they may be gone to-morrow. Nothing that we have received but sheer existence with its wondrous sensibilities faculties can we permanently hold. God Himself will not take that from us. all else is liable to be "taken away..." Even the particles that build up our bodily frame are going: from us every moment. This: is life—qains and losses. How much that we all once had has been taken away from us. The freshness of childhood, the buoyancy of youth, the circles of early friendships. These vicissitudes of life-First: Remind us that this world is not กนข Secondly: Urge us to rest on the Unchangeable.

II. THE LIFE OF THE TRUE HAS AN ENNOBLING CREED. Job felt that God was in all the receivings and losings of his life. "The Lord gave

and the Lord hath taken away." Some trace their viciositudes to chance, and some to necessity, but Job te God. He recognised God in all the events of his life. This creed is—

First: Reasonable. If there be a God, He must be concerned in everything—the small as well as the great. This creed is—

Secondly: Scriptural. The Bible is full of it. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without his notice. This creed is—

Tairdly: Dignifying. It brings God in conscious proximity to man in his every-day life. God's agency is recognised in all.

III. THE LIFE TRUE HAS A MAGNANIMOUS HELIGIOUSNESS. "Blessed be the name of the Lord." The language is that of pious exultation. This spirit is something more than submission to the Divine will under suffering-even something more than an acquiescence in the Divine will in suffering. It is exultation in the manifestation of Divine will in all the events of life. It amounts to the experience of Paul, who said, "We glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience, experience." &c.

SOUL STRENGTH.

"Who, passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well: the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength: every one of them in Zion appearable before God."—Psa. lxxxiv. 6, 7.

THREE times a year the law of Moses required all the men. and as many of the women as were able to go up to Jerusalem, in order celebrate certain feasts, commemorative of certain great events in their history. He who could take a position commanding a wide view of the country. would see on those occasions groups of pilgrims wending their way in all directions from various parts of Palestine to the metropolis, the multitudes swelling like a river at the confluence of its streams, as they approached the city. Such was the scene before the imagination David when he composed He, however. this Psalm. was an exile from Jerusalem. through the rebellion of his son, and was not privileged to engage in those festivities. Still he longed to go up to Zion, "My soul longeth, vea, fainteth for the courts of the Lord." We take the text to illustrate true strength of soul, and we observe-

I. THAT IT SPRINGS FROM A SPECIAL CONNECTION WITH GOD. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee."

All true strength of soul arises from connection with God. (1) Love is strength. The stronger the love of a soul the more strength it has. But no love so strong as that which is fastened upon infinite perfection. (2) Determination is strength. The stronger the purpose of a soul is the more invincible its energy; but no purpose so strong as that which has the full concurrence of the reason, the conscience, and the heart. Such a purpose must be directed to the service of God. (3) Hope is strength. The soul full of hope is full of It rises buoyant energy. under trial, it conquers difficulties, and braves perils. No hope so strong as that which is directed to God. strength like the strength of soul; strength of body is good, strength of intellect better, but strength of soul is the highest good.

II. IT CHANGES THE UN-PROPITIOUS IN CIRCUMSTANCES "Who, pas-INTO BLESSINGS. sing through the Valley of Baca, maketh it a well, whose rain also maketh it pools." Geography has not fixed the site of this valley; it seems, however, to have been a peritous pass on the way to Jerusalem. Its name literally means the valley of weeping. But this valley—a scene of drought and dangerbecomes a scene of refreshing waters. The spiritual idea suggested is, that souls possessing true moral strength can turn the most unfavoursble circumstances of life into blessings, make the dry and barren Bacas of life fresh and Panl and Silar froitful. made their dungeon a Paradise. Godly strength transforms Bacas into Edens. Paul did this; here is his experience: "Though sorrowful always rejoicing," &c., &c.

III. IT SUSTAINS A PRO-GRESS IN THE JOURNEY OF LIFE. "They go from strength to strength." "From company to company" it is in the margin. If this is correct: the reference undoubtedly is to the bands that were formed by friends and neighbours in setting out to Jerusalem. Christ Himself was once a member of one of these bands that journeyed to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passovers when his parents missed Him. But some consider the phrase should be rendered, "They go from one halting - place to another." These pilgrims had their halting - places, places where they rested their weary limbs, and refreshed their exhausted frames with Whatever be the best rendering, progress is the idea. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on the wings of]

eagles."

IV. IT ENABLES THE SOUL TO REACH AT LAST THE VERY PRESENCE OF THE ETERNAL. "Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." Every one in the various companies who went forth with a true soul, appeared in the Holy City. No one perished by the way, none cut off by wandering banditti, none devoured by wild beasts, none wandered back --- each went on until He appeared before God in Zion. So in a higher sense will it be with all true souls who derive their strength from God. Their feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." They shall see Him as He is." Let us seek this strength. "Wherefore, gird up the loins of your minds; be sober, and watch to the end, for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."

PALSE RELIGION.

"Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye i shall lie down in sorrow."-Isa. l. 11.

THESE words suggests three thoughts concerning the false religions of men :—

L Man CREATES "Ye have kindled the fires." What are they? There are at least five false religions that prevail in Christendom, and under the name of Christianity. First: The religion of creed. The religion of thousands is nothing more than a form of words—mere verbalism. A sound creed is essential to a sound religion, but is not itself a sound re-Secondly: The religion. ligion of moods. What were called "frames" and "feelings," constitute the religion of many. Desires for heaven, dread of hell, sensuous sympathy with Christ's sufferings, these are the religious "sparks." Thirdly: The religion of ordinance. A constant and rigorous attention to all the prescribed rites and ceremonies of churches constitute the religion of others. Fourthly: The religion of Many are deproxyism. pending upon the services of priests. The priest is the light of the soul. Fifthly: The religion of merit. All these are false religions prevalent amongst us, as man is the creator of them. "Ye have kindled them." not God.

IL HEAVEN ALLOWS THEM.

"Walk in the light of your fire." You have kindled these hights yourselves, and walkin the radiance. First: the permission is strange. Does it not strike you as something wonderful that the great Father of spirits should allow his human offspring to walk on through life in those false lights that must conduct them to utter darkness? Yet so it is. Why does He not quench those lights at once? Oh, why? Secondly: the permission is significant. (1) It shows God's respect for that freedom with which He has endowed human nature. (2) It suggests that in giving the Gospel, He has given all that is necessary for man to get the right religion.

III. MISERY **FOLLOWS** THEM. "This shall ye have of my hands; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Death will put out all false lights from the Who shall describe, nay, who shall imagine, the "sorrow" that follows the extinction of all the religious lights of the soul. What utter darkness! First: there is the "sorrow" of bitter disappointment. All the hopes cherished, blasted for ever. The sandy foundation has given way amidst the tempest, and the whole edifice has tumbled to pieces. Secondly: There is the "sorrow" of poignant remorse. The soul fierce in its condemnation on itself for neglecting the study of the religion of Christ, and cherishing its own miserable delusions. Thirdly: there is the "sorrow" of black deepair. All hopes of improvement gone.

Brother, no religion willbeam on with increased radiance up to and beyond the grave for ever, but the religion of Christ, which consisteth not in "meat and drink, but in rightcoursess, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

THE SON OF MAN.

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."—Matt. ix 6.

I. THE RELATION OF THE SON OF MAN TO THE EARTH. It was the scene of his nativity—the development of his character—his sufferings and death—his ascension. following illustrations show his relation to the earth. is called the Branch of the Lord, the True Vine, the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley, the Tree of Life, Bread of Life, Rock, Door, Way, Shepherd, Lamb, Passover, the Light of the World, &c.

II. THE RELATION OF FOR-GIVENESS TO THE SON OF MAN. First: To his atoming secrifice. "And without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." (Heb. ix. 22.) Secondly: To his exaltation and intercession in heaven. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.)

III. THE RELATION OF FOR-GIVENESS TO TIME. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." This leads us to notice, first: The preciousness of time. Secondly: That forgiveness is not obtainable in eternity.—JOSEPH JENKINS. THE FALL AND THE RISING.

"Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel."—Luke ii. 34,

I. THE NATURE OF THIS FALL. First: It is a fall from the side of Jesus, Secondly: It is a fall through neglect and unbelief. Thirdly: It is a fall without hope of recovery.

II. THE NATURE OF THE RISING EFFECTED BY THE TRUTH. First: It is a rising with the Saviour. Secondly: It is a rising from the lowest depth. Thirdly: It is a rising to the highest position.

Joseph Jenkins.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. C.)

A SOUND INTELLECT.

. "Good understanding giveth favour."
-- Prov. xiii. 15.

I. THE NATURE OF A SOUND INTELLECT. What is a "good understanding?" A good understanding must include four things.

First: Enlightenment. The soul without knowledge is not good. Some understandings are as dark as midnight; others are illumined by false lights; others are partially lighted by the true light. A good understanding is that which is well informed, not merely in general knowledge, but

in the science of duty and of God.

Secondly: Impertiality. A good intellect should form its conclusions and pronounce its decisions according to the merits of the question, regardless of the interest of self, or the frowns or favours of others. It should hold the balance of thought with a steady hand.

Thirdly: Religiousness. By this I mean it must be inspired with a deep sense of its allegiance to heaven.

Fourthly: Practicalness. It should be strong and bold enough to carry all its decisions into actual life. "A good understand-

ing have all they that do his commandments." (Psa. iii. 10.) Thus it appears a good understanding is tantamount to practi-

cul godliness.

II. THE USEFULNESS OF A SOUND The greatest bene-INTELLECT. factor is the man of a good understanding. A man whose mind is well enlightened; impartial, religious, and practical. thoughts of such men as these are the seeds of the world's best institutions, and most useful arts and inventions. The man of good understanding is the most useful in the family, in the neighbourhood, in the market, in the press, in the senate, in the pulpit, everywhere. Such a man "giveth favours." His ideas break the clouds of human ignorance, and quicken the faculties of dormant souls.

First: No favours so valuable as mental favours. He who really helps the mind to think with accouracy, freedom, and force, to love with purity, and to hope with reason, helps the man in the

entirety of his being.

Secondly: No one can confer mental favours who has not a good understanding. An ignorant man has no favour to bestow on souls. "Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge the wing with which we fly to heaven." (SHAKESPBARE.) Let us, therefore, cultivate a sound intellect, enlightened, impartial, religious, and practical, that we may give to our race the highest favours. "I make not my head a grave," says Sir T. Browne, in his quaint way, "but a treasury of knowledge; intend no monopoly, but a com-munity in learning; I study not for my own sake only, but for theirs that study not for themselves; I envy no man that knows more than myself, but pity them that know less. I instruct no man as an exercise of my knowledge, or with an intent rather to nourish and keep it alive in mine own head, than beget and propogate it in his; and, in the midst of all my endeavours, there is but one thought that dejects me—that my acquired parts must perish with myself, nor can be legacied among my honoured friends."

(No. CI.)

THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS.

"But the way of transgressors is hard."—Prov. xiii. 15.

I. The transgressor has A way. How shall the way of a transgressor be described? There are three general features that characterize the way of all transgressors.

First: Practical atheism. From beginning, to end God is not practically recognised; He is not as a practical power in the thoughts of any of the pilgrims of this way. None of them like to retain Him in their thoughts.

Secondly: Practical materialism.
The things that are seen and temporal, are the great dominant and influential powers: the spiritual universe is practically

ignored.

Thirdly: Practical selfishness. To every walker on the road self is everything; the centre and circumference of life. The interests of others, the claims of God Himself, are all subordinate to self gratification and aggrandisement. Such is the way of the transgressor. Truly a broad way.

II. The way of the transgressor is HARD. Though it is a popular way, a way which millions go, it is not altogether an easy way.

First: It is a hard way, in the sense of difficulty. Every step is a "kicking against the pricks." The traveller's own conscience, the moral sense of society, the institutions of nature, the whole current

of the Divine government, are against him. He has to struggle

hard to make way.

Secondly: It is hard in the sense of results. The happiness aimed at is never fully got. There is a miserable dissatisfaction, and often moral agony. "The way of peace they know not," &c. (Isa. lix. 18.) The wicked are like the troubled sea while it cannot rest, whose waters cast out mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked. The wages of sin is death.

(No. CII.)

THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH.

"Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly."—Prov. xiii. 16.

1. The wise man. "He dealeth with knowledge." This implies—

First: That he has knowledge. Knowledge is essential to a wise man. All true knowledge has its foundation in God. Knowledge is a tree with many and varied branches, as high and as broad as the universe, but God is the root and the sap, the strength and the beauty of the whole tree. There is no knowledge that includes Him not. It implies—

Secondly: That a wise man treats his knowledge wisely. "He dealeth with knowledge." Whilst knowledge is essential to wisdom, it is not wisdom. A man may have a great deal of knowledge, and no wisdom. Wisdom consists in the right application of knowledge. The wise man so deals with his knowledge as to culture his own nature, and promote the real progress of his race. "Perfect freedom," says Plato, "hath four parts-viz., wisdom, the principle of doing things aright; justice, the principle of doing things equally in public and private; fortitude, the principle of not flying danger, but meeting it; and temperance, the principle of subduing desires, and living moderately."

II. THE FOOLISH MAN. Foolish men show their folly in at least

two ways.

First: By talking about things of which they know little or nothing. There are two notable facts in (1) The more human nature. ignorant a man is, the more gar-Empty-minded persons are generally talkative. (2) The less one knows of a subject, the more fluently he can talk about it. The very fluent preachers are those who have never thought sufficiently on theological subjects to reach their difficulties. thinker, discerning difficulties in every turn, moves cautiously, reverently, and even with hesitation. The fool speaks rashly.

Secondly: By attempting things which they are incapable of achieving. The foolish man knows not his aptitudes and inaptitudes. Hence he is seen everywhere, striving to be what he never can be; to do that which he never can accomplish. He attempts to build a tower without counting the cost. (Luke xiv. 28.). "Thus he layer hopen his folly."

(No. CIII.)

HUMAN MISSIONS AND THEIR DISCHARGE.

"A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health."—Prov. xiii, 17.

EVERY man has a message in life. There is none without his mission. There are messages from men. Few men in civilized society could be found who are not entrusted with some message, some commission from their fellow-men. Some as servants, teachers, merchants, rulers. There are messages from God. Every man is sent into the world with certain duties to fulfil. These

duties constitute his mission to earth. The text teaches—

I. THAT THERE IS A RIGHT AND A WRONG DISCHARGE OF THIS MES-SAGE. There is a wicked messenger and a faithful ambassador. The wrong and the right way would be indicated by answering the question, What is the right discharge of our mission? He only discharges the various messages of life who does it-First: Conscientiously. The man who acts without a conscience acts beneath his nature. The man who acts against his conscience acts against his nature. He alone acts worthy of his nature who acts according to the dictates of his conscience. A man should throw conscience into every act. Secondly: Intelligently. A man should understand the nature of the grounds of his message. Without this knowledge, though he acts conscientiously, he acts not rightly. Some of the greatest crimes ever wrought on our earth have been perpetrated conscientiously. Paul was conscientious in his ruthless persecutions. perhaps were some of the Jews in putting to death the Son of God. Thirdly: Religiously. All must be done with a supreme regard to that God whose we are, and whom we are bound to serve. No message, even that of the humblest servant, is discharged rightly if not discharged rightly towards "Whatsoever the great Master. you do in deed or word, do to the glory of God."

II. THAT EVIL OR GOOD INEVITABLY RESULTS FROM THE MANNER IN WHICH THE MESSAGES ARE TREATED. "The wicked messenger falleth into mischief." His message, perhaps, may be a wrong message, a message of falsehood and injustice; or his message may be right, and he may deliver it unfaithfully. In either case mischief comes. Mischief to the man

himself-mischief to society. The man who speaks a wrong thing is a "wicked messenger," and the man who speaks a right thing wrongly is also a "wicked messenger." These wicked messengers, and the world abounds with them, produce incalculable mischief. Mischief springs from a wrong act as death from poison. On the other hand, the "faithful ambassador is health"—health to His own conscience himself. He is "health" approves of it. to those whom he represents their wishes are gratified, their interests are served --- he is "health" to those to whom he is sent. At last he will hear the Divine words of approbation addressed to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant," &c.

(No. CIV.)

THE INCORRIGIBLE AND THE DOCILE,

"Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured."
—Prov. xiii. 18.

I. THE DOOM OF THE INCOR-RIGIBLE. The incorrigible is one who habitually "refuseth instruction." There are men, either from stolidity of nature, or the force of prejudice, or the power of habit, who are uninstructable. natures are closed against new light, they move in a rut from which no force can move them. To such, the text tells us, "poverty and shame" shall come to them. These two things are not necessarily associated. Poverty that springs from necessity, is a misfortune, not a crime, and therefore no cause for shame. Poverty that springs from sacrifice in the cause of duty and philanthropy, is a virtue rather than a vice, and therefore has no connection with shame. A poverty, however, brought on by incorrigibility of character, is

associated evermore with shame. It is a disgraceful poverty. That such shameful poverty springs from such conduct, is manifest in the ordinary life of men. We see it—

First: In secular matters. The farmer, the tradesman, the professional, who doggedly adhere to their own notions, and will not receive the instruction which modern science affords, are often so unable to compete with those who are open to every new and improved theory of action, that they come to a dead failure in their undertakings, and meet with poverty and shame. We see it—

Secondly: In intellectual matters. Those who neglect the culture of their minds from youth up, and will not receive instruction, have a poverty of mind that is associated with shame. We see it...

Thirdly: In moral matters. He who neglects the spiritual culture of his nature, has a poverty of soul that is distressing to contemplate. He is poor and wretched. He feeds on husks. What worse doom can there be shameful destitution in secular, mental, and moral things? Shame is the worst of the furies:

"Shame urges on behind; unpitying shame, That worst of furies, whose fell aspect frights

Each tender feeling from the human breast." THOMSON.

II. THE DESTINY OF THE TEACH-ABLE. "He that regardeth reproof shall be honoured." Honour is a popular word, but has many and often diverse meanings:—

"Ask the proud peer what's honour? he displays

A purchased patent or the herald's blaze; Or if the royal smile his hopes have

Points to the glittering glory on his breast.

VOL. XX.

Yet if beneath no real virtue reign, On the gay coat the star is but a stain; For I could whisper in his lordship's

Worth only beams true radiance on the star." WHITEHEAD.

The truly docile man whose faculties are ever in search of truth, and who makes Christ his great Rabbi, will assuredly be honoured. First: His own soul will honour him. He will have the approbation of his own conscience. Secondly: Society will honour him. So long as mind is mind, society must ever honour men who are the recipients of the true and the divine. Thirdly: God will honour him. God smiles on the genuine inquirer, the real truth - seeker. He takes such under his guardianship, and leads them on into higher and still higher fields of thought. There is no honour but in goodness:-

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."
TENNYSON.

(No. UV.)

SOUL PLEASURE AND SOUL PAIN.
"The desire accomplished is sweet to
the soul: but it is abomination to fools

to depart from evil.—Prov. xiii. 19. I. Soul PLEASURE. What is it? An accomplished desire. Desire is the spring power of our activities. Locke defines it "as the uneasiness which a man feels within him on the absence of anything whose present enjoyment carries the delight with it." The desires of the soul, which are very varied, are very significant of our destiny. "Our desires," says Goethe, "are the presentiments of the faculties which lie within us, the precursors of those things which we are capable of That which performing. would be and that which we desire present themselves to our

imagination, about us and in the future. We prove our aspiration after an object which we already secretly possess. It is thus that an intense anticipation transforms a real possibility into an imaginary reality. When such a tendency is decided in us, at each stage of our development a portion of our primitive desire accomplishes itself under favourable circumstances by direct means, and in unfavourable circumstances by some more circuitous route, from which, however, we never fail to reach the straight road again." Indeed, pleasure consists in the gratification of desires. The quality and permanency of the pleasure must ever depend on the object of the desire. If the thing desired is immoral, its attainment will be "sweet to the soul" for a little while, but afterwards it will become bitter as wormwood and gall. The triumph of truth, the progress of virtue, the diffusion of happiness, the honour of God, these are objects of desire that should give a holy and everlasting sweetness to the soul. God Himself should be the grand object of desire. As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

II. Soul Pain. "It is an abomination to fools to depart from evil." First: There is soul pain in being connected with evil. Conscience is always tormenting the sinner; from its nature it can never be reconciled to an alliance with evil. Secondly: There is soul pain in the dissolution of that connection. There is a fierce conflict, a tremendous battle in the effort.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

PULPIT BLOQUENCE.—THE POWER AND ACCENT OF CONVICTION.

HITHERTO, we may be said to have treated human instrumentality; we must now consider our subject in a higher point of view. Reason, imagination, and sentiment are necessary qualifications to success in our vocation; but we require besides these the power of God, because our aim is to lay hold of and to direct the souls of men. Now, as that mighty genius Bossuet has re-marked, "There is nothing so indomitable as the heart of man. When I see it subdued, I adore." And why? Because he recognised in such submission a superhuman agency.

This power we possess in the Word, which is the power of God; before which every head must bow, and every knee bend, whether on earth, in heaven, or in hell. Armed with the Divine word, our power is immense; only in order to wield it, we must ourselves bethoroughly penetrated thereby, and above all, be able to convince others that we are so. It must be felt, seen, and acknowledged that God is with us.

The Divine word is the foremost power in the world. It has withstood and overcome every other power . . . It has uttered its voice everywhere: in the catacombs, at the foot of the scaffold, under the axe of the executioner, and within the jaws of wild beasts. It has spoken while the feet of the speakers have been drenched in blood. . .

During the middle ages, mighty barons, sheltered behind impregnable strongholds, had cast the net-work of their sway over the whole of France, and silence was imposed on all lips. Nevertheless, on more than one occasion did the Divine word, in the guise of a priest or monk, venture to ascend the steps of those redoubtable fortresses; and its voice alone sufficed to inspire fear in the breasts of men clad in armour of steel.

There was a king in whom power seemed incarnate. king was Louis XIV. He dared to say :-- "L'état, la France, c'est moi." Under his inspiring look, military genius triumphed in war; poetry begat the sublimest conceptions; canvas spoke; marble was animated; and the arts replenished even the gardens of his royal abode with masterpieces

.of skill.

One Sunday, Louis XIV., surrounded by his court, took his seat in the chapel at Versailles, when the preacher boldly uttered from the pulpit those terrible words: "Woe to the rich! Woe to the great!" whereat the monarch lowered his eyes, and the courtiers murmured. After the sermon, there was some talk of reprimanding the priest for his temerity; but the King remarked, with a justice which does him honour :- "Gentlemen, the preacher has done his duty; it behoves us now to do ours."

We may recognise herein the power of the Divine word: and it is that same word which is on our

What indeed, is the word of man even in the mouth of the boldest orator, even when set forth in all the brilliancy of its power, when compared with the Divine word?... Much has been said of the force of Mirabeau's famous apostrophe:—"The communes of France have decided on deliberating. We have heard of the designs which have been suggested to the King; and you, who are not allowed to be his organ with the National Assembly -you who possess neither the standing nor the option, nor the right of speaking—go and tell your master that we are here by the power of the people, and that it shall not be wrested from us except at the point of the bayonet."*

This speech has been eulogized as grand, bold, and even audacious; but, good God! what does it amount to? Any priest might do as much, and say something far better, with greater truth and less arrogance; for there is no priest, however poor and humble he may be, who might not say :-"We are here in God's name, and here we intend to remain, and we will speak in spite of guns and

bayonets.'

But the fact is, we are not adequately convinced of our own power, and of the superiority which we possess over everything around us; for, with nothing else in our hands but that little book which is called the Gospel, we may bring the world to our feet; inasmuch as the Gospel is, and will continue to be, as regards mankind generally, the first of books.

There are not wanting those who taunt us in this style:—"Ye men of a past age, ye retrogrades, follow in the wake of your own age; strive to progress. We, on our part, have been constantly advancing, especially within the last two centuries . . . we have gained ground." . . . To this

The authenticity of this statement has been questioned.

we are justified in replying:-"Very true; the human mind has developed, you have worked hard; you have stirred up thought; you have filled our libraries with first-rate books: there have been some profound thinkers and sublime geniuses among you; and you have given birth to many admirable ideas. All this we admit; nevertheless, show us a book superior to our Gospel, or one which will even bear comparison with it. Tell us where it is to be found. You talk of progress, and bid us follow you; but it is we who are in advance, and you who are behind. . . . Begin your studies afresh: do something better, and then come to us again, and we will see. In the meantime, we occupy the foremost place, and are determined to hold it."

Our power, we maintain, is far above that of any earthly weapons; for the Christian preacher is backed by eighteen centuries of learning and virtue, which believed what he declares—by more than ten millions of martyrs, who died to attest the truth of what he proclaims; and, behind all that, he is supported by the mighty voice of God, which says to him:—"Speak, and be not afraid, for I am with thee."

It behoves us, therefore, to be thoroughly persuaded of the power which the Divine word confers upon us. But, besides this, we must make our hearers feel that we are so endowed. They must be impressed, whilst listening to us, that we verily and indeed speak in God's name—that we are not men who have merely cogitated or mused in their studies, and then come forth to propound their own ideas; but that we are commissioned from on high to proclaim to mankind the laws and promises of God, before whom we ourselves profoundly bow. They must read all this in our whole deportment, in our voice, our gestures, and, above all, in our charity. In a word, we must possess the accent of conviction, that accent which believes, speaks, arrests, and alarms.

The accent of conviction is made up of a mixture of faith. power and love combined; the combination forming a characteristic which is at once simple, pious, and grand, redolent of inspiration and sanctity. It is the power, the life of speech; the sacted fire, or what Mirabeau styles divinity in eloquence. "I have never heard any one speak," said he, referring to Barnave, "so long, so rapidly, and so well; but there is no divinity in him." The accent of conviction is the magic of speech . . . that which puts argument to silence, withdraws all attention from the preacher, and fixes it solely on what he says; or, rather, on what God says through him.

Unhappily, we are very backward in this respect. There is faith undoubtedly in our souls; but it is not always manifest in our speech. . . How, then, can we expect to make others believe what we do not seem to them to believe ourselves?

We have to deal with a light, reasoning, and somewhat sceptical world, accustomed to regard every one as merely acting a part... and if you do not possess the accent of conviction, it will either suspect you of hypocrisy, or will brand you by admiring how well you ply the trade, and how cleverly you play your game.

There is a remark very common now-a-days, which is much to be regretted. If one speaks of a preacher, he is immediately asked: "Has he faith?" which means, Does he appear to believe what he says? Should the reply

be, "No; . . . but he is a fine speaker; " the rejoinder generally is: "Then I shall not go to listen to him; for I want to hear somebody who has faith." This observation is not intended to imply any doubt of the inward faith of the preacher, but that he preaches as if he did not believe what he utters.

Let us, however, do the world this justice, that when it meets with the accent of convictionthe bold accent of faith, as St. Chrysostom calls it—it is deeply impressed thereby. The preacher who believes, and speaks out of that belief, astounds, staggers, and overcomes the gainsayers. A few words uttered with the accent of conviction go much further than many long sermons. How, indeed, can any prevail against one in whom God is felt to dwell? . . . Fine language, talent, imagination, brilliant argumentative powers—all these are common enough amongst us, and we are quite accustomed to them; but what is rare, what is unlookedfor, what carries everything before it, is the language of a faith and of a heart which seems to echo the voice of God Himself.

Two years ago, the late pious and gallant Captain Marceau was present at a meeting of operatives in Paris, many of whom were unbelievers and wrong-headed men. He felt moved to address them. and the impression which he produced was almost magical. had never before spoken in public; nevertheless, he did so on the occasion referred to with that accent of conviction and candour which finds its way at once to the heart, overcoming all resistance, and sometimes seeming to take away one's breath.

"My friends," said he, "there are doubtless some among you who are not yet Christians, and who have no love for religion. I

was once as ungodly as you are perhaps more so; for no one has hated Christianity more cordially than I have done. I am bound, however, to do it this justice, that while I was not a Christian, that is, till I was twenty-three years old, I was unhappy, profoundly unhappy. . . . Up to that period, my friends, I had not lived. No. it was not living. . . . I worried myself, or, rather, my passions drew or drove me hither and thither, and carried me away; but I did not live . . . I was a machine . . . but I was not a man. . . . "

Strange to say, scarcely any attention is paid to this accent of conviction, which is the soul of all eloquence; more especially, of sacred eloquence. Those destined to proclaim the Divine word, are instructed in everything else but this. . . . Hence the language from the pulpit is often cold, monotonous, turgid, stiff, cramped, conventional, perfunctory; savouring of a formal compliment, but of nothing to indicate the effusion of a genial soul, and without any of those felicitous sallies of the heart, those insinuating familiar tones, as Fénélon calls them, which produce in you almost a Divine impression.

And yet there are many pious priests amongst us, many who are truly men of God. Still, such is the deplorable power of routine, that their piety seems to abandon them when in the pulpit—the very place where it should be

most conspicuous.

Like myself, you have, doubtless, in the course of your life, often met with one of those estimable priests, full of faith and charity. His countenance alone did you good, and his words cheered you alike in familiar conversation and in the confessional. . . . The same individual occupies the pulpit: you are delighted to see

him there, and forthwith set yourself to listen to him with earnest attention; but, alas! you no longer recognise him: he is no longer the same; what he utters is no longer the word of life. You exclaim: "What has become of my model pastor, my saint?" for you hear nothing now but declamation, or a sing-song speech . . . a uniform tone which utters the denunciation: "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire," and the invitation: "Come ye blessed of my Father," in the same strain. . . . You hear what you have heard a hundred times before—a poor man who, with a painful sense of effort, is doing his best to evoke refractory thoughts and phrases, and are almost led to doubt whether he is not acting a part.

This monotony, this dull uniformity, this mannerism, must be abandoned, and we must resume our personality—our own minds and hearts—enlarged and inspired by the breath of God; otherwise, by persisting in that dismal tone, that frigidly-philosophical style, that finely-spun phraseology, that speech without emphasis, which characterizes the generality of our sermons nowa-days, we shall wholly lose time, our pains, and, perchance, our souls also.

Can it, indeed, be that we are wanting in a just sense of our mission, and that we do not adequately estimate the object which those who speak in God's name should have in view? The end of preaching is to bring back the souls of men to the Creator.

In this respect, also, it is to be feared that the philosophical spirit, and a tendency to controversy, have turned us aside from our proper aim and the end of all our efforts. Take away the accent

of conviction from a sermon, divest it of energetic faith, and what is left thereof to the hearers? Mere sounding phrases, and

nothing more?

Now, let me ask, are you aware of the enemies with whom you have to deal, and the difficulties which you have to contend against? The object set before you is to redeem the hearts of men, who, in their thirst, their rage for happiness, have given themselves up to the sensual, visible, intoxicating things which surround them. You will have to do battle with the human passions; to say to pride, be abased; to voluptuousness, be accursed; to the love of gold, renounce your avarice, and be bountiful . . . and you fancy that you will succeed in the encounter by the use of mere phrases, forgetting, perchance, that those passions can make better phrases than yours. They know how to give them life, and will hurl them at you, glowing with a fire which will speedily devour your cold and meagre . . . Nothing can respeeches. strain and subdue the passions but the inspiration, the power of God.

It is high time that we should resume the accent of conviction in our ministrations. Having that, the soul is perfectly at ease, and, feeling sure of its footing, cherishes the widest benevolence. . . . Why should it be troubled, knowing that it is secure in the Power on which it relies? It is only those powers which doubt their own strength that are suspicious and wavering. And when God is with us, we cannot fail to entertain profound pity for the weaknesses, the prejudices, the profanities, and the false reasonings of humanity.

M. L' ABBE ISIDORE MULLOIS, Chaplain to Napoleon III.

Theological Hotes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

MANUSCRIPT AUTHORITIES FOR THE GOSPELS, ETC.

Query.—What are the chief ancient manuscript authorities for the text of the Gospel and Acts of the Apostles?—C. M. J.

Replicant.—In answer to the question of C. M. J., we give the

following extract:—

THE VATICAN MANUSCRIPT.— This is by common consent allowed to be the oldest existing copy of the sacred text. It was probably written in Egypt, in the fourth century, i.e., between A.D. 300 and 400. It is in the Vatican Library at Rome, and, owing to the vexatious restrictions of that establishment, is almost inaccessible to scholars. No accurate edition of it has ever been published, and in some passages it is still doubtful what its text is. had access to it for five days in 1861, and examined some hundred or two of doubtful places; but five days' work in Rome is equal to not more than two days in England, the nominal library hours at the Vatican being only three, and the real ones not more than two and a quarter. MS. is contained in one small quarto volume. It is written on vellum, very clearly and beautifully, and is in admirable preservation. Were it anywhere but at Rome, it would long ago have been photographed, and thus given in its original form to the Church. Permission to effect this has more than once been sought, but has been as often persistently refused. The whole

treatment of this great manuscript, including the pretended edition of it by the late Cardinal Mai, is a disgrace to the Roman Catholic Church.

THE SINAITIC MANUSCRIPT.-This, which is in value almost equal to the Vatican, was produced by Professor Tischendorf, in 1859, from the Monastery of St. Catherine, on Mount Sinai. It also is supposed to have been written in the fourth century. A magnificent edition of this MS., printed page for page and line for line, with types cast to imitate the letters of the original, was sent forth from St. Petersburgh in 1863, and is now to be found in most of our considerable libraries. An audacious assertion was made by a celebrated forger of manuscripts, named Simonides. to the effect that he, when young, wrote this MS. with his own But this is completely disproved by the phenomena of the MS. itself, and is now entirely exploded, and the MS. received unhesitatingly by all scholars as one of the principal ancient testimonies to the sacred text.

The Parisian Manuscript.—
This very valuable MS. is unfortunately only a series of considerable fragments, with large gaps between them. It is of that kind called palimpsest, being writing which has been again written over by a later hand and with other matter, so that the sacred text has to be painfully deciphered beneath the same modern writing. It is supposed to have

been originally written in the fifth century, i.e., between A.D. 400 and 500. An accurate edition of it has been published by Professor Tischendorf, page for page and line for line.

THE ALEXANDRIAN MANUSCRIPT. -This MS. once belonged to Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, and was by him presented to our King Charles L. It is now in the British Museum. It is generally believed to have been written in the fifth century. An edition, in types imitating the original, and page for page and line for line, was published in London by Woide, in 1786; and there is a modern one, in ordinary type, by Mr. Harris Cowper. This MS. is in quarto, much dilapidated, the ink of the letters having eaten through the vellum, and it would in consequence be extremely difficult to photograph effectively.

THE CAMBRIDGE MANUSCRIPT. presented by the Reformer Beza to the University Library at Cambridge in 1581. Edited. with imitation types, and line for line, by Dr. Kipling, in 1793; and re-edited still more carefully by Mr. Scrivener in our own time. This very remarkable MS. is now generally supposed to have been written in the latter end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century. The sacred text in this MS. is peculiar, differing often very much in form of expression, and not seldom in sense also, from that in the rest. Sometimes, and especially in the Acts of the Apostles, clauses and passages are found which are not in the other MSS. The origin of these must ever remain a matter of question—whether they have been inserted in a shorter original text, or were originally in the text, and have been excluded by a process of abridgment.

These are the most considerable ancient authorities to the Gospels and Acts. Of them the VATICAN MS. contains the Gospels and Acts complete. The SINAITIC MS. the same. The Parisian MS., as above noticed, fragments only. The ALEXANDRIAN MS. has unfortunately had the first leaves torn off, and does not begin till Matt. xxv. 6. It has also lost from John vi. 50 to viii. 52. CAMBRIDGE MS. contains the Gospels and Acts, but with many and considerable gaps, e.g., Matt. vi. 20 to ix. 2; John i. 16 to iii. 26; xviii. 13 to xx. 13; Acts viii. 29 to x. 14; and xxii. 29 to end.

There are, besides these, several MSS. of similar date, containing larger or smaller portions of the whole:—as, e.g., a Dublin MS. of the sixth century, containing the Gospel of St. Matthew, two "palimpsest" fragments at Wolfenbuttel, containing many fragments, and written in the fifth and sixth centuries, &c., &c.

And there are the testimonies of the ancient versions into different languages, some of them far older than our oldest MSS., and the testimonies of quotation in the writings of the ancient Fathers. These latter are of course somewhat difficult to get at, seeing that these writers quoted often from memory, and attributed to one evangelist the words of another. But sometimes, where an author quotes expressly, or discriminates by name one evangelist from another, the testimony is precise and valuable.

DRAN ALFORD.

Literary Hotices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end, Since none can compass more than they intend.

HISTORY OF RATIONALISM. Embracing a Survey of the Present State of Protestant Theology. With an Appendix of Literature. By John F. Hurst, D.D. London: Trübner and Co., 60, Paternoster Row.

This work reminds us that the best things in our world get sadly perverted. Rationalism is a good thing. To adopt a system of thought conformable to the laws of reason, or to pursue a course of conduct agreeable to the dictates of our rational nature, cannot be wrong. And yet, here are systems of thought and methods of action denominated rational, that will neither bear the test of reason or Scripture. "The rationalists," says Lord Bacon, "are like the spiders, they spin all out of their own bowels. But give me a philosopher, who, like the bee, hath a middle faculty, gathering from abroad, but digesting that which is gathered by its own virtue." Our author describes rationalism as the most recent, but not the least violent and insidious of all the developments of scepticism; and his object is to show its historical position, and its antagonism to Christianity. The three principles which he declares to have influenced him in undertaking this discussion arethat infidelity presents a systematic and harmonious history—that a history of a mischievous tendency is the very best method for its refutation and extirpation—and that rationalism is not in its results an unmixed evil, since God overrules its work, for the purification and progress of his Word. Those who in theology are called rationalists, are not infidels in the sense of rejecting the Scriptures. admit," says Dr. Bretschneider, "universally that there is in Christianity a divine, benevolent, and positive appointment for the good of mankind; that Jesus is a messenger of Divine Providence; that the true and everlasting word of God is contained in the Holy Scriptures, and that by the same the wealth of mankind will be obtained and extended. But they deny that there is anything supernatural in Holy Writ, and consider the object of Christianity to be that of introducing into the world such a religion as reason can comprehend." This description, perhaps, may be regarded as generally correct. The volume

before us is most valuable. It gives by far the most fair and comprehensive view of the whole subject. It is, in truth, a history of the rationalistic idea, in all its phases, as it has appeared in the works of the great theological writers of Christendom. We have no work like it. It takes a place entirely unoccupied in theological literature, and fulfils a mission exclusively its own. Theological students must get it.

THE HUMAN WILL: ITS FUNCTIONS AND FREEDOM. By T. HUGHES.
London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

This work is on a subject of very limited interest, but of universal importance. Who cares about studying the human Will? Who ought not to study it as the spring of all moral life, and as the fountain of all history? This work is divided into four parts. In the first the Will is considered in itself, and in some of its peculiar characteristics. The second, the question at issue between the necessitarian and the libertarian. In the third, necessitarianism is stated and considered, and in the fourth, the liberty of the will is explained and vindicated. Though the author necessarily touches such points of metaphysical difficulty as will prevent all his thoughtful readers from going thoroughly with him, none will fail to appreciate the remarkable fairness and great ability with which he has conducted the discussion. He has evidently made himself well acquainted with our leading metaphysical writers, and shows he can fathom their profundities, and measure souls with them. We are not a little pleased to find that an author so manifestly Christian, and philosophically thoughtful, should find in an age so superficial as this, a class of readers sufficiently large to keep bis pen so busily at work, for we observe that he has become a voluminous author.

Broken Fragments. By Rev R. Thomas, Liverpool.

The author of these discourses combines reverence for antiquity with delight in the progress of thought and knowledge. The first discourse, on "The Creed of Lost Spirits," exposes hollow religionism, and sets forth the energetic goodness of faith in the Living God. Sad is the sight of a Christianity without Christ, as our author shows. "Cæsarism" is a similar exposure of religious worldliness or wordly religionism—wealth worship. "The Address to Working Men" exhibits the sympathy of a true man with men in every condition of life. The heart of a loving brother of human kind pulses in all; he expounds life in connection with truth and love. "Recognition in the Unseen World" is a very suggestive discourse. "Misrepresentation" is a separate sermon from the series entitled, "Broken Fragments." We commend the publications.

THE IMPRECATORY PSALMS. Six Lectures, with other Discourses, delivered at Bacup, Lancashire. By the Rev. R. A. Bertram. London: Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row.

THE Imprecatory Psalms are puzzles to the critical student, and often stumbling-blocks to the common reader of the Holy Book. The attempt which our author has made in these lectures, to show that they contain nothing that is contradicted, or condemned by anything in the New Testament, whether satisfactory to all, or not, is most praiseworthy in motive, and able in effort. The volume contains not only six lectures on the Imprecatory Psalms, but also six discourses on other important subjects. Every page teems with vigorous thoughts, and rings the notes of an intelligent, honest, and athletic soul.

THE WEDDING GUESTS; OR, THE HAPPINESS OF LIFE. A Novel. By Mrs. Hume Rothery. London: F. Pitman.

This is a tale written with skill and in a good spirit. It is very unpleasant to have the company of nasty and unnatural creations even in books. This is the great complaint we have against some of the many tales of the day, particularly those issued by a certain eminent authoress in her fashionable monthly. The absence of low views of human nature and the presence of right principle entitle Mrs. Rothery's novel to respectful consideration. Her views on her own sex are excellent and commendable.

CHAMBERS'S ENCYCLOPÆDIA: a Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People. Vol. IX. London: W. and R. Chambers, 47, Paternoster Row.

This makes the ninth large and handsome volume of this most valuable work. We have frequently called the attention of our readers to it. indicated its characteristic merits, and heartily commended it. We expect the next volume will complete the undertaking, which constitutes, in truth, a library in itself. Every known thing and person of any interest whatever, are not only brought into notice, but described with historic accuracy, and in a scientific spirit. We have been astonished to find the immense amount of light which is thrown upon a subject from the space of a single column. There are no waste words whatever. Every word stands for a thing. The illustrations too, which are very numerous, are so life-like that their rough sketch brings the subject which they illustrate clearly before the eye. The maps are the most accurate and artistic productions of the kind which we have ever seen in a work. In this volume we have no less than nine maps. We have a map of Spain and Portugal, of Sweden and Norway, of Switzerland, of Tasmania, of Turkey in Europe and Greece, of Turkey in Asia, of the United States of North America, and also of Victoria.

THE COMMON-SENSE OF ENGLISH ORTHOGRAPHY. By E. JONES. London: F. Pitman.

This little work is dedicated by Mr. E. Jones to the Bishop of St. David's, as the President of the Philosophical Society. It is intended as a guide to the spelling of doubtful and difficult words, and is for the use of printers, authors, examiners, teachers, and students generally. The subject is one of very great and of ever-increasing importance; and Mr. Jones has treated it in a logical, careful, and clever manner. His book is altogether very interesting, and will well repay an attentive perusal, and a critical examination.

FAITHFUL ENDURANCE AND HIGH AIM. By The MAS HUGHES.
London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co.

On several occasions we have had pleasure in noticing the works of Mr. Hughes, and in recording our appreciation of them. The present one is worthy its predecessors. The occasion of its publication was the death of the Rev. Dr. Wesley Ethridge. In addition to the funeral sermon which Mr. Hughes preached for that gentleman, it contains a brief memoir of his life. Interesting and valued as this little book will be to those who were connected with its immediate subject, its value will not be confined to them alone. Its contents will be profitable to any reader. Mr. Hughes is no common-place thinker.

THE CLUSTER CRUSHED: An Exposition, Doctrinal, Experimental, and Practical, of the last chapter of Hosea. By John Dawson, Hull, B.A. London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

Here are fourteen short, plain, and practical discourses on the last chapter of Hosea. There is a spirit and an unction in this little volume that will make it very acceptable to a large class of Scripture readers. It has also much good thinking and vigorous writing in it.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, with Sermon Notes, of the late Rev. C. J. Collinson, M.A. London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

This book contains a biographical sketch of a very excellent clergyman, who for many years laboured hard and well in our own neighbourhood. All loved him and not a few were blest by him. Though dead he yet lives. The sermon notes are simple, brief, evangelic. Whilst those who attended his ministry will value them, others may derive great profit by their perusal.

JUDD AND GLASS, PRINTERS, PHENIX WORKS, ST. ANDREW'S HILL, E.C.







